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African-American Legislators Post-Katrina:  
Race, Representation, and Voting Rights Issues in the Louisiana House

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
University of New Orleans  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy  
in  
Department of Political Science

by

William T. Hoston

B.G.S., University of New Orleans, 1997  
M.S., Florida State University, 1998

December 2007

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## **DEDICATION**

To my late Grandmother, Mildred Hoston and God-mother, Thelma C. Owens,  
Your desire to help people has made me who I am.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First, all praise to my Lord and savior, Jesus Christ. With him, all things are possible.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	viii
ABSTRACT	ix
CHAPTER 1: Introduction	1
Focus of the Study	3
General Background of African-American Legislators	3
Purpose of Study	10
History of African-American Legislators in Louisiana	14
Previous Studies of African-American Legislators in Louisiana	20
Outline of the Study	22
CHAPTER 2: Review of Literature	24
State Policy-Making	24
Defining “Black Interest”	25
Influence Districts	29
Campaign Strategies of Black State Legislators	34
Committee Assignments	38
Political Incorporation	40
Summary	44
CHAPTER 3: Data and Methodology	45
Bill Introduction	49
Bill Co-Sponsorship	52
Roll-Call Votes	53
Bill Passage	55
Interviews	57
Interview Questions	58
Summary	59
CHAPTER 4: 2007 Demographic Profile of the Louisiana House	60
Party Affiliation	60
Tenure in the Legislature	61
Educational Achievement	63
Occupation	64
Gender	65
Summary	67

CHAPTER 5: Substantive Representation, Political Incorporation, and Campaign Strategies	68
Background	68
Substantive Representation	70
The Return of Displaced Residents	70
Accessibility	71
Traditional “Black Interests” Services	72
Time Devoted to Services	73
Contact With Constituents	74
Bill Introduction	76
African-American Legislators Assessment of Hurricane Katrina	77
Local Government	77
State Government	79
National Government	81
Did Race Play A Role in the Slow Response?	82
African-American Legislators Efforts After Hurricane Katrina	83
Voting Rights Legislation in the Post-Hurricane Katrina Period	85
Bill Introduction	85
Co-Sponsorship	89
Roll-Call Votes	91
Bill Passage	104
African-American Leadership	106
African-American Legislators: Introduction and Passage	108
Did Race Play a Role in the Defeat of Legislation?	108
Political Incorporation in the Louisiana House of Representatives	110
Louisiana House Structure	110
Louisiana House Committee Assignments	111
Campaign Strategies of African-American House Members	113
Campaign Strategies	113
Summary	114
CHAPTER 6: Conclusion	116
Recommendations for Future Research	118
REFERENCES	121
APPENDICES	128
VITA	137



## LIST OF TABLES

### *CHAPTER 1:*

TABLE 1.1 African-American Legislators in the Southern States, 1970-2007	2
TABLE 1.2 African-American Legislators in the Louisiana House of Representatives, 1968-2007	16
TABLE 1.3 African-American Legislators in the Louisiana Senate, 1968-2007	18

### *CHAPTER 4:*

TABLE 4.1 Political Affiliation of Members in the Louisiana House, 2007	61
TABLE 4.2 Legislative Tenure of Members in the Louisiana House, 2007	62
TABLE 4.3 Educational Achievement of Members in the Louisiana House, 2007	63
TABLE 4.4 Occupation of Members in the Louisiana House, 2007	65
TABLE 4.5 Gender Differences of Members in the Louisiana House, 2007	66

### *CHAPTER 5:*

TABLE 5.1 Negative Binomial Regression of Bill Introduction in the Louisiana House, Post-Hurricane Katrina Legislative Sessions	88
TABLE 5.2 Negative Binomial Regression of Bill Co-Sponsorship in the Louisiana House, Post-Hurricane Katrina Legislative Sessions	91
TABLE 5.3 Roll-Call Votes of African-Americans and White Legislators in the Louisiana House, Post-Hurricane Katrina Legislative Sessions	94
TABLE 5.4 Roll-Call Votes of White Legislators in the Louisiana House, Post-Hurricane Katrina Legislative Sessions	96
TABLE 5.5 Roll-Call Votes of White Democrats and BVAP in the Louisiana House, Post-Hurricane Katrina Legislative Sessions	98
TABLE 5.6 Roll-Call Votes of Republicans and BVAP in the Louisiana House, Post-Hurricane Katrina Legislative Sessions	101
TABLE 5.7 OLS Regression of Roll-Call Votes in the Louisiana House, Post-Hurricane Katrina Legislative Sessions	103
TABLE 5.8 African-American Leadership Positions in the Louisiana House, 2007	107

## **ABSTRACT**

Since the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (VRA), the number of African-Americans competing for and holding state legislative offices has increased significantly. Their growth is most notable in southern state legislatures. A growing number of studies have been devoted to African-Americans in these state legislatures. Absent from previous studies is a comprehensive analysis of African-Americans in the Louisiana state legislature.

In 2007 there were a total of 32 African-American legislators. Louisiana ranks among other states with the highest number, 32, and percentage, 22, of African-American legislators. Yet, despite their relatively large presence few scholarly studies have examined their legislative behavior. This study focused primarily on the substantive representation of African-Americans, especially during the post-Hurricane Katrina period.

In this dissertation, the following questions were examined: Have the growing number of these legislators resulted in greater influence in state policy-making? Have they chaired any important, policy-relevant committees in the state legislature? Have they articulated and advocated a race-based legislative agenda for African-American constituents? Using a multi-methodological approach including the analysis of voting rights legislation introduced in the post-Hurricane Katrina legislative sessions and qualitative interviews, evidence was found to conclude that African-American House members have provided substantive representation to their constituents, obtained key institutional leadership positions, and campaigned in biracial terms, which has contributed to their ability to have a notable impact in the chamber.

**Keywords:** African-American legislators, Substantive Representation, Political Incorporation, Campaign Strategies, Voting Rights, Louisiana.

## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

Since the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (VRA), the number of African-Americans competing for and holding state legislative offices has increased significantly. Important civil rights and redistricting legislation, coupled with the changing styles of campaign strategies of black political candidates, has led to the increase of black legislators at the state level. According to Bositis (2001), the number of African-Americans serving in state legislatures increased from 169 to 584 between 1970 and 2001. In 2001, African-American state legislators occupied more than eight percent of state legislative seats nationwide. Their growth is most notable in southern state legislatures. In these legislatures, the number of black legislators has grown dramatically. For example, in 2007, Louisiana had 32, Alabama 34, Florida 25, Georgia 53, Mississippi 48, South Carolina 35, and Texas 16 serving in both chambers of the legislature (see Table 1.1). As a result, southern state legislatures have become a focal point of studies on black legislators (e.g., Holmes 2000; Orey 2000; Sullivan 2000; Legette 2000; Menifield and Shaffer 2005).

There is considerable debate, however, over the extent to which more black legislators as a group lead to more political influence in these legislatures. Have they chaired any important, policy-relevant committees in the state legislature? Have they articulated and advocated a race-based legislative agenda for African-American constituents? Have the growing number of these legislators resulted in greater influence in state policy-making?

**TABLE 1.1**  
**African-American Legislators in the Southern States, 1970-2007**

States	Louisiana	Alabama	Florida	Georgia	Mississippi	South Carolina	Texas
1970	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	14 (6%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	3 (2%)
1975	9 (6%)	6 (4%)	2 (1%)	17 (7%)	1 (1%)	12 (7%)	7 (4%)
1980	12 (8%)	15 (11%)	5 (3%)	25 (11%)	17 (10%)	14 (8%)	12 (7%)
1985	18 (13%)	24 (17%)	12 (8%)	27 (11%)	20 (11%)	20 (12%)	14 (8%)
1990	20 (14%)	23 (16%)	14 (9%)	32 (14%)	22 (13%)	21 (12%)	14 (8%)
1995	30 (21%)	35 (25%)	20 (13%)	47 (20%)	31 (18%)	31 (18%)	15 (8%)
2000	31 (22%)	35 (25%)	20 (13%)	43 (18%)	45 (26%)	33 (19%)	16 (9%)
2005	31 (22%)	34 (24%)	24 (15%)	49 (21%)	47 (27%)	32 (19%)	16 (9%)
2006	32 (22%)	34 (24%)	24 (15%)	48 (20%)	47 (27%)	33 (19%)	16 (9%)
2007	32 (22%)	34 (24%)	25 (16%)	53 (22%)	48 (28%)	35 (21%)	16 (9%)
N	144	140	160	236	174	170	181

Source(s): David Bositis, Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, Black Elected Officials: A Statistical Summary, 1982 and 2001; 2002-2007 National Conference of State Legislators, <http://www.ncsl.org>; Louisiana([www.llbc.louisiana.org](http://www.llbc.louisiana.org)), Alabama ([www.legislature.state.al.us](http://www.legislature.state.al.us)), Florida ([www.fcbsl.org](http://www.fcbsl.org)), Georgia ([www.galbc.org](http://www.galbc.org)), Mississippi ([www.ls.state.ms.us](http://www.ls.state.ms.us)), South Carolina ([www.sclbc.org](http://www.sclbc.org)), and Texas ([www.capital.state.tx.us](http://www.capital.state.tx.us)); Morris, John. 1970. *Black Elected Officials in the Southern States*, Voter Education Project of the Southern Regional Council: Atlanta, GA:

Note: The above table includes both chambers of the legislature.

### **Focus of the Study**

The focus of this study is the influence of African-American legislators in Louisiana. In the post-VRA era, the number of African-American legislators in Louisiana has grown tremendously. In 2007 there was a total of 32 African-American legislators, a record high for the state since Reconstruction. In comparison to other southern legislatures, Louisiana ranks among the states with the highest number, 32, and percentage, 22, of African-American legislators (see Table 1.1). Yet, despite the relatively large presence of African-American legislators in Louisiana, scholarly attention devoted to them has been limited. Little is known about these legislators, including the substantive representation they provide for African-Americans, the campaign strategies of these legislators, what they have accomplished while in office, the incorporation of these legislators within the legislature, and their legislative success.

### **General Background of African-American State Legislators**

The inclusion of African-Americans as legislators at the state level has provided an opportunity for the systematic advancement of African-American political and socioeconomic interests (Clemons and Jones 2000, 744). State legislatures are important bodies through which African-Americans can attempt to achieve their policy goals. Haynie (2001, 2) asserts that these legislators are becoming just as important, if not more, than African-Americans serving in the United States Congress. He argues that these legislators do offer more than symbolic representation; they now provide substantive representation by having input in the making of important political decisions regarding the constituents in their respective district and state.

According to Pitkin (1967, 209), substantive representation entails acting “in the interest of the represented in a manner that is responsive to them.” That is, substantive representation is achieved when the legislative actions of the representative are congruent with their constituents’ opinion on policy issues. In contrast, Pitkin defines descriptive representation as “the representative’s characteristics, on what he is or is like, on being something rather than doing something. The representative does not act for others; he ‘stands for’ them, by virtue of a correspondence or connection between them, a resemblance or reflection” (61). Pitkin concludes that descriptive representation is limited and does not guarantee that the representative will provide substantive representation for their constituency.

Mansbridge (1999, 628) defines descriptive representatives as “individuals who in their own backgrounds mirror some of the more frequent experiences and outward manifestations of belonging to the group.” Descriptive representatives have similar characteristics as their constituents, such as race, ethnicity, gender or social class, which is expected to provide them with a better understanding of the interest of their constituents. She states that descriptive representation “promote[s] a representative’s accurate representation of and commitment to constituents interests” (629). Mansbridge argues that black politicians, for example, are better suited than white politicians to represent the needs and interests of the black electorate. She suggests that black elected officials, therefore, are more likely to provide substantive representation. Menifield (2001, 6) argues that voters, especially black voters, want to be represented by someone that looks like them. Bullock (1975, 727) concurs, stating that “white politicians may be unable to comprehend some black needs and therefore fail to introduce them into the

policy-making arena.” African-American politicians are expected to “translate these demands into policy” (727).

Many scholars, however, have disputed the notion that the increased number of black legislators will necessarily benefit black constituents. They argue that such increases will have a negative impact on the representation of blacks overall (see Swain 1993; Lublin 1997; Cameron, Epstein and O’Halloran 1996; Guinier 1991). Swain (1993), for example, argues that purposeful drawing of districts to elect racial and ethnic minorities will have a negative effect on substantive representation. Districts intentionally drawn to be majority-minority drain adjacent districts of African-American voters and create more white conservative districts, which will result in the election of more white Republican legislators. Swain states that “descriptive representation of blacks guarantees only black faces and is, at best, an intangible good; substantive representation is by definition real and color blind” (211). That is, white representatives may provide as much substantive representation as black representatives.

Scholars have found that, once elected to state office, the political incorporation of black legislators has an impact on the legislative process (Haynie 2001, Miller 1990). Political incorporation refers to the extent to which a group has achieved a political position that allows them to influence policy decisions (Browning, Marshall, and Tabb 1994). Haynie (2001, 16), in a study of African-American legislators in multiple legislative sessions across five states, found that the increased number of black legislators in state legislatures has produced a significant black presence that has raised the expectation that black legislators will have a greater influence on the legislative agenda.

Further, Haynie explains that their presence has elevated the expectation that they will introduce “black interest” bills that address policy issues important to black constituents.

Hamm, Harmel, and Thompson, in a study of the 1977 sessions of the lower chambers of the Texas and South Carolina state legislatures (1983), concluded however that black legislators were no more likely than white legislators to introduce bills important to the black community. The legislative activity of black legislators was relatively low in both states, but slightly higher in South Carolina where black legislators did offer amendments to bills introduced by their white counterparts. In a more recent study of six state legislatures examining three legislative sessions in 1969, 1979, and 1989, Bratton and Haynie (1999, 660-663) indicated that black legislators are more likely than whites to focus on “black interest” bills that addressed issues such as employment, health care, and poverty. While the authors found that black legislators were less successful than whites in passing their bills, they concluded that black legislators provided substantive representation for their black constituents.

A number of studies have found that despite the growing presence of these legislators, they must obtain leadership positions in their legislatures to be influential in setting the legislative agenda and the passing of legislation (Hamm, Harmel, and Thompson 1983; Thielemann 1992; Miller 1990; Bratton and Haynie 1999; Haynie 2001). Miller (1990) in her study of state legislative black caucuses, found that blacks in the North Carolina Legislative Black Caucus relied on their leadership positions on committees to improve the likelihood that legislation important to black interests would be passed. Also, Thielemann (1992) concluded that black legislators must occupy key leadership roles on legislative committees to influence the outcome of legislation.



Conversely, studies have found that leadership positions held by black legislators do not increase bill introduction nor guarantee legislative success (Perry 1976; Nelson 1991). Perry (1976) in a study of the Missouri House of Representatives in 1969-1970, found that black legislators that do occupy key leadership roles in state legislatures have limited or no legislative success. Similarly, Nelson (1991) in a study that examined minority incorporation in forty-five lower state legislative chambers in the sessions of 1982, 1984, and 1986, found that African-Americans in leadership positions such as party leaders or committee chairs did not influence the legislative agenda.

In addition to holding leadership positions, studies have shown that the determinants of party control and seniority are important in analyzing the legislative influence of African-American legislators (see Whitby 2002; Bratton and Haynie 1999; Haynie 2001). Whitby (2002) in a study of intraracial bill sponsorship among members of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) between 1991-1998, found that CBC members are more likely to introduce race-related legislation when Congress is under Democratic party control. Because the majority of CBC members are Democrats, the probability of introducing this type of legislation increased under Democratic Party leadership. However, under Republican control there was a “depressing effect on the number of black-interest bills Caucus members will sponsor” (104). Also, he found that seniority is positively associated with the sponsorship of race-related legislation. CBC members that served more years in Congress were more likely to introduce “black interest” bills than junior members (102-104).

The understanding of partisan differences among white legislators is also important in the introduction and support of “black interest” bills. In their study of southern

congressional politics, Black and Black (1987) argue that southern white Democrats elected from majority-white districts, but with a considerable minority constituency, must balance the policy preferences of both groups. The authors explain that “to understand why biracial politics directed toward liberal goals face long odds...it is crucial to focus on the values, beliefs, and predilections of the white majority [population]” (296). In sum, they found that white Democrats are more supportive than Republicans on legislation that addresses the interests of African-Americans.

The size of the black voting age population (BVAP) has an impact on the partisan differences of white legislators. A number of researchers have used the percentage of the black constituency to explain the support of “black interest” bills (Key 1949; Keech 1986; Combs, Hibbing and Welch 1984; Whitby and Gilliam 1991; Overby and Cosgrove 1996; Cameron, Epstein, and O’Halloran 1996; Hutchings, McClerking and Charles 2004). As early as V.O. Key’s (1949) seminal work, *Southern Politics in State and Nation*, he found that white representatives from districts with a high percentage of black voters would be less responsive to black interests, confirming the “racial threat” hypothesis.<sup>1</sup>

Studies that have examined partisan differences after the VRA of 1965 have found a curvilinear relationship. Keech (1986) revisited Key’s theory to find that whites were less responsive to the lowest levels of black voters (< 20%), and the highest levels (>30%) pose a threat to leadership. White responsiveness to black interests depends

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<sup>1</sup> Key theorized that Southern Democrats in the “black belt” regions would “have the deepest and most immediate concern about the maintenance of white supremacy” (5). He found that in districts with a high percentage of blacks, patterns of responsiveness to black interests were low. In these particular districts the maintenance of control by whites was important.

largely on the critical level (20-30%) of blacks in the district. Some recent studies show similar results. Cameron, Epstein, and O'Halloran (1996) and Hutchings, McClerking, and Charles (2004) found that white U.S. House members most responded to black interests when their districts were in the critical range of 20-30 percent.

Other studies, however, such as Combs, Hibbing and Welch (1984, 432-33), show that in non-southern districts white members of the U.S. House are more liberal in their roll-call voting as the percentage of blacks in their district increases. Southern Democrats were responsive when there was a substantial black voting age population (40 percent or more). Whitby and Gilliam (1991) found that southern Democrats in the U.S. House were responsive to the proportion of blacks in their districts. Southern Democrats elected prior to the 1960s were less responsive than those elected after 1960 in their roll-call votes (514). They concluded that the higher the percentage of blacks, the greater the support for "black interest" bills.

In a later study, Whitby (1997) found that southern white members of the U.S. House have been less supportive of bills related to African-American interests than their non-southern counterparts (93-97). In the South, white Democrats were more supportive of black interest legislation than Republicans. He states that "party is becoming increasingly influential in explaining legislators' support of black policy preferences" (93). Whitby and Krause (2001) advance a similar finding. They found that southern House members were "considerably less supportive of black policy interests" than non-southern House members (563). The authors concluded that southern Democrats with a large percentage of black voters were more responsive than their Republican counterparts.

The variation in the responsiveness of southern white legislators in districts that contain a considerable percentage of black voters will be explored. This study examines whether previous findings are applicable to white legislators in Louisiana. The effect of the increased percentage of black voters within a white legislator's district is somewhat ambiguous. The curvilinear relationship is not consistently found (Keech 1986; Cameron, Epstein, and O'Halloran 1996; Hutchings, McClerking, and Charles 2004), and although there have been consistent findings that southern Republicans have not been responsive to minority concerns regardless of the size of the African-American presence in their districts (Combs, Hibbing and Welch 1984; Whitby and Gilliam 1991; Overby and Cosgrove 1996; Whitby 1997), the same studies have shown that for southern white Democrats there is a positive relationship but support varies. This study posits that there will be a positive linear relationship between the size of the black voting age population and white responsiveness.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This study intends to increase our knowledge of the political influence of African-American legislators in Louisiana. While previous studies, in general, have provided mixed results concerning the influence of African-American state legislators, this study seeks to explore whether their findings are applicable to African-American legislators in Louisiana. For instance, Walton (1985) and Nelson (1991) found that the presence of African-American state legislators has resulted in little influence within their legislatures. They hold few leadership positions, limited committee chairmanships, and have had little success in passing the bills they introduced. On the other hand, Haynie (1999) provided a different conclusion, finding that the increased presence of African-American legislators

has translated into more influence in their legislatures. They have obtained leadership positions such as party leaders and chairmanship positions, and provided increased influence on public policy for African-American constituents. Nelson's findings of African-American state legislators differed greatly from those of Haynie. Much of Nelson's results, related to legislative productivity and political incorporation, were statistically insignificant. He concluded that African-American influence in state legislatures varied according to the state's political and demographic make-up. In contrast, Haynie found that the increased number of African-American legislators provided an advantageous position from which to have an influence in state legislatures.

This study will focus specifically on three salient dimensions of the influence of African-American legislators in the Louisiana state legislature. First, the study will assess whether African-American legislators provide substantive representation to African-American constituents. It is argued that previous studies have misidentified what substantive representation constitutes. They have concluded that substantive representation occurs when African-Americans are on the winning side of roll-call votes (e.g., Thielemann 1992; Miller 1990; Shaffer et al. 2005). According to Shaffer et al. (2005, 5), in the introduction to an edited volume of studies on African-American representation in southern state legislatures, "we [will] also examine the representation of African-American interests from the perspective of law-makers 'acting for' the represented, which we call 'substantive representation,' through an analysis of key roll-call votes." Their analysis solely focused on whether African-Americans were on the winning side of roll-call votes in determining if they provided substantive representation to their constituents. This measure of substantive representation is inconsistent with

Pitkin's (1967) definition, which holds that substantive representation is achieved when the representative acts in a manner that is responsive to the interests of constituents.

While the passage of legislation introduced by African-American legislators is important in analyzing substantive representation provided to black constituents, substantive representation may or may not result in their policy preferences being enacted. Singh (1998, 210-211), in a study that examines the role of the CBC in Congress, concluded that while the CBC has had few substantive policies enacted, their presence and role in Congress is vital to black constituents. The CBC has made considerable gains in "acting for" black constituents by obtaining resources and providing services to the African-American community. In this study, substantive representation is not dependent on legislative success and African-American legislators acting on behalf of their black constituents is not limited to being on the winning side of roll-call votes. Substantive representation can also entail bill introduction, service to the African-American community, contact with and service to constituents, and resources provided to their districts, as well as voting in the legislature in a way that is responsive to black concerns.

Second, the study will investigate the political incorporation of these legislators. Previous studies have found that African-American legislators need to hold positions of leadership (i.e. party leader, committee chair or vice-chairperson) to influence public policies and the passing of legislation (e.g., Hamm, Harmel, and Thompson 1983; Miller 1990; Thielemann 1992; Haynie 2001). This study will explore whether leadership positions are a predictor of influence on agenda setting and legislative success to

determine whether previous findings are applicable to African-American legislators in Louisiana.

Third, the study will focus on the campaign strategies of African-American legislators. According to Canon (1999, 191-199), the campaign strategy of a black candidate often determines their legislative behavior and ability to influence public policy while in office. He found that legislators who practiced the “politics of commonality” were more likely than those that practiced the “politics of difference” to sponsor bills that achieved legislative success (198). While Canon’s findings are limited to legislative influence at the federal level, this study seeks to explore whether African-American candidates running for legislative offices in Louisiana employ a racialized, deracialized, or middle-ground strategy to be elected and if this will influence the type of legislation they introduce once elected. While redistricting has provided these legislators with majority-black districts, almost all of these districts contain a substantial percentage of white voters. Therefore, these competing campaign strategies are important in garnering vote support. This study will build upon prior research on campaign strategies to investigate whether the racial composition of their districts will affect the type of campaign strategy they employ and whether their campaign strategy will affect their ability to provide substantive representation and achieve success in the legislature (Canon 1999; Perry 1996).

This study will focus on African-American members in the Louisiana House of Representatives. African-American legislators in the House of Representatives occupy a larger number of seats (23) than in the Senate (9). Proportionally, African-American legislators represent 22 percent of the legislative body in the House of Representatives

and 23 percent in the Senate. The study will focus on one state, Louisiana, one legislative chamber, the House of Representatives, and three legislative sessions, the 2005 1<sup>st</sup> extraordinary session, the 2006 1<sup>st</sup> extraordinary session and the 2006 regular session. These legislative sessions were held following Hurricane Katrina. Legislation introduced in these sessions addressed substantive policy issues related to the recovery efforts of displaced citizens. The LLBC introduced legislation during these sessions in the policy areas of (1) emergency preparedness, (2) housing, (3) commerce, (4) insurance, and (5) voting rights.

### **History of African-American Legislators in Louisiana**

African-Americans have served in the Louisiana state legislature as early as Reconstruction. Reconstruction was a critical period in Louisiana politics. African-Americans obtained political office in extraordinary numbers at the state-level. Vincent, in *Black Legislators in Louisiana During Reconstruction* (1976), provides a thoroughly documented account of black political leadership during that period. In 1868, there were 35 black members in the House, 29 percent, and seven in the Senate, 18 percent (71). The goal of many of these legislators was to advance substantive policies that would help combat the racist institutions that hindered the progress of African-Americans in the state. These legislators were mainly interested in bills that provided education reform and advanced civil rights. Although met with resistance, they were able to claim several small legislative victories.<sup>2</sup> Typically, they voted in line with the majority of white legislators rather than acting as a distinct voting bloc (89-96).

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<sup>2</sup> On February 23, 1869, a bill entitled An act to Enforce the Thirteenth Article of the Constitution became a law. This bill addressed public accommodations provisions of the



From 1868-1870, black legislators in the House sat on several committees. With the exceptions of Emile Honore and Adolphe Tureaud, who sat on the powerful Ways and Means Committee, black legislators were relegated to the less important committees such as the Committee on Education, Committee on Banks and Banking, Committee on Railways, and the Penitentiary Committee. Of the twenty-one committees appointed by the Speaker of the House, blacks were chairmen of only four committees. In contrast, blacks in the Senate did not obtain any significant committee assignments, being assigned to only minor committees (Vincent 1976, 82-85).

Vincent states that from the early 1880s to 1900, only thirty black legislators can be identified. Nine blacks served as senators and twenty-one as representatives. He states that the last black senator left office in 1890 and the last black representatives left office in 1900 (220). Afterwards, blacks were missing from the Louisiana state legislature until 1968.

In 1968 Ernest “Dutch” Morial was elected to a New Orleans seat in the House, ending a 68-year void in African-American representation. In 1971 Dorothy Mae Taylor became Louisiana’s first African-American female legislator, replacing Morial after he won a seat as a judge on the New Orleans Juvenile Court.

From 1968 to 1977 a number of African-Americans were elected to the legislature (see Table 1.2). In 1972 eight African-Americans were elected to office in the House. These were Alphonse Jackson of Shreveport; Richard Turnley, Jr. and Johnnie Jones of Baton Rouge; and Johnny Jackson, Jr., Theodore Marchand, Louis Charbonnet, III, Nick

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Constitution and provided recourse of civil suits to injured parties (94). And, on March 10, 1869, Act No. 121 became a law that brought into operation a new educational program that addressed the need to establish an improved public educational system in the state (89).

Connors and Dorothy Mae Taylor (incumbent) of New Orleans. In 1976 Jones lost his reelection bid while Marchand did not seek reelection. However, four new House members were elected to office that year. These members were Joseph A. Delpit of Baton Rouge and Thomas Jasper, Rev. Rev. Avery C. Alexander, and Diana E. Bajoie of New Orleans. While the number of African-Americans in the House was growing, no African-American was elected to the Senate until 1977 (see Table 1.3), when Sidney Barthelemy of New Orleans was the first African-American to be elected to the Senate since 1890 (<http://www.legis.state.la.us/llbc/history>, 2006).

**TABLE 1.2**  
**African-American Legislators in the Louisiana House of Representatives, 1968-2007**

1968-1972	1972-1976	1976-1980	1980-1984	1984-1988
E. Morial ('70 resigned) Taylor ('71)	A. Jackson Charbonnet Connors J. Jackson J. Jones Marchand Taylor Turnley	A. Jackson Alexander Bajoie Charbonnet Connors Delpit J. Jackson Jasper Turnley ('78 LLBC 2 <sup>nd</sup> Chairman)	A. Jackson Alexander Bajoie C. D. Jones Charbonnet Connors Delpit Frazier ('82) J. Jackson Johnson Turnley	A. Jackson Alexander Bajoie C. D. Jones C. R. Jones Copelin ('86) Delpit ('84 Speaker Pro Tempore) Irvin J. Jackson ('86 N.O. City Council) Johnson ('85 State Senator) L. Jetson ('84 died) Morrell Newman R. Jetson Singleton W. Carter Warren
2 Members	8 Member	9 Members	11 Members	17 Members

(TABLE 1.2 continued)

1988-1992	1992-1996	1996-2000	2000-2004	2004-2007
A. Jackson Alexander Bajoie ('92 State Senator) C.D. Jones ('90 LLBC 5 <sup>th</sup> Chairman) C.R. Jones Carter Copelin Delpit Dixon Holden Irvin Morrell Pratt ('91) R. Jetson Singleton Warren	Alexander Armstrong ('93 resigned) Copelin ('92 Speaker Pro Tempore) Curtis Dixon ('93 Public Service Commission) Dorsey-Welch ('93) Farve Green Guidry ('93 State Senator) E. Guillory ('93) Holden Hudson Hunter Irons ('93, '95 State Senator) Mitchell Morrell Murray Pierre Pratt Quezaire R. Jetson Simpkins Singleton T. Carter ('94 N.O. City Council) W. Carter ('93 District Judge) Weston Wilkerson Willard-Lewis ('93)	Alexander ('99 died) Baylor Copelin ('97-99 LLBC 8th Chairman) Curtis Dorsey-Welch Farve Glover Green E. Guillory Holden Hudson Hunter K. Carter ('99) L. Jackson ('99) Lucas ('99) Mitchell Morrell Murray Pierre Pratt Quezaire R. Jetson ('96 LLBC 7 <sup>th</sup> Chairman) Richmond ('99) Weston Wilkerson Willard-Lewis	Badon ('03) Baylor Curtis Dorsey-Welch Duplessis ('03) Gallot Glover Gray ('03) Green E. Guillory Holden ('04 Elected Mayor to East Baton Rouge) Honey ('01) Hudson Hunter ('03 LLBC 11 <sup>th</sup> Chairman) J-Bullock ('03) K. Carter L. Jackson Lucas M. Jackson Morrell ('00 LLBC 10 <sup>th</sup> Chairman) Murray Peychaud ('02) Pierre Pratt ('02 N.O. City Council) Quezaire Richmond Shepherd ('03) Swilling ('01) Weston-Broome ('03 Speaker Pro Tempore) Wilkerson ('00 died) Willard	Badon Barrow ('05) Baylor Burrell Curtis D. Cravin, Jr. ('04-'06) Dorsey ('06 Speaker Pro Tempore) Gallot Glover Gray E. Guillory A. Guillory ('07) Harris ('05) Honey Hudson ('04 died) Hunter J-Bullock K. Carter LaFonta ('05) ( '07 LLBC 13 <sup>th</sup> Chairman) M. Jackson Marchand A. Morrell (retired) J.P. Morrell ('07) Murray ('05 State Senator) Pierre Quezaire (retired) Richmond ('05-'07 LLBC 12 <sup>th</sup> Chairman) Shepherd ('05 State Senator) Weston-Broome ('05 State Senator) Williams ('07)
16 Members	28 Members	26 Members	31 Members	30 Members

Source: <http://www.legis.state.la.us/llbc/history>, 2006

Note: The values in parentheses indicate the years served in the term. The last row indicates the total number of African-Americans in the state House during the term.

**TABLE 1.3**  
**African-American Legislators in the Louisiana Senate, 1968-2007**

<b>1968-1972</b>	<b>1972-1976</b>	<b>1976-1980</b>	<b>1980-1984</b>	<b>1984-1988</b>
	Barthelemy	Barthelemy ('77 LLBC 1 <sup>st</sup> Chairman - '78 At-Large Seat on N.O. City Council) Braden	Braden Jefferson	Bagneris J. Johnson ('85) Jefferson ('84 LLBC 3 <sup>rd</sup> Chairman) Tarver Turnley
0 Members	1 Member	2 Members	2 Members	5 Members
<b>1988-1992</b>	<b>1992-1996</b>	<b>1996-2000</b>	<b>2000-2004</b>	<b>2004-2007</b>
Bagneris ('89 LLBC 4 <sup>th</sup> Chairman) Bajoie ('91) C. Fields J. Johnson Jefferson ('91 US Congress) Tarver	Bagneris ('92 President Pro Tempore) Bajoie ('94 LLBC 6 <sup>th</sup> Chairman) C. Fields ('93 US Congress) Cravins Guidry ('93) Irons ('94) J. Johnson Jones M. Morial ('94 Mayor N.O.) Tarver	Bagneris ('96 President Pro Tempore – '98 Judge 4 <sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals) Bajoie Boissiere ('99) C. Fields ('98 - '99 LLBC 9 <sup>th</sup> Chairman) Cravins Guidry ('97 Judge) Irons J. Johnson Jones Tarver W. Fields	Bajoie ('03 President Pro Tempore) Boissiere C. Fields Cravins (Retired '05) Holden ('02) Irons J. Johnson Jackson ('03) Jones Tarver W. Fields ('01 Judge Nineteenth JDC)	Bajoie Boissiere ('05 Constable Seat) Broome ('05 President Pro Tempore) C. Fields Cravins Jr. ('06) Duplessis Irons ('04 Civil District Court Judge) Jones L. Jackson Murray ('05) Shepherd ('05)
6 Members	10 Members	11 Members	11 Members	11 Members

Source: <http://www.legis.state.la.us/llbc/history>, 2006

Note: The values in parentheses indicate the years served in the term. The last row indicates the total number of African-Americans in the state Senate during the term.

In 1977, ten African-American members of the Louisiana legislature founded the Louisiana Legislative Black Caucus (LLBC). The founding members, all Democrats, were Sidney Barthelemy (chairman), Diana E. Bajoie, Nick Conners, Alphonse Jackson, Johnny Jackson, Jr., Louis Charbonnet, III, Joseph A. Delpit, Rev. Avery C. Alexander, Thomas Jasper, and Richard Turnley, Jr.<sup>3</sup> The LLBC was established as an organization to address the interest of African-American citizens in the state of Louisiana. The primary goal of the LLBC was, and still is, to raise the quality of life for African-Americans in the state (<http://www.legis.state.la.us/llbc/history>, 2006).

In the post-1980s and 1990s rounds of redistricting, the Louisiana Legislative Black Caucus (LLBC) fought to pass important reapportionment legislation that led to the creation of more majority-black districts that in turn resulted in the increase number of African-American legislators. In their analysis of redistricting in Louisiana following the 1990 census, Engstrom and Kirksey (1998) show that African-American representation in Louisiana increased significantly after redistricting plans adopted by the state meet the preclearance provisions under section 5 of the VRA.<sup>4</sup> While Louisiana had historically proposed redistricting plans that helped to dilute the African-American vote, prior to the 1991 state legislative elections a number of districts were drawn that captured an African-American majority and provided African-Americans with an opportunity to elect the candidates of their choice. This increased the number of majority-black districts for the state House from 15 to 26, from which 23 African-American candidates were elected.

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<sup>3</sup> Dorothy Mae Taylor of New Orleans did not participate in the caucus.

<sup>4</sup> Section 5 of the VRA requires that any change in election laws and procedures must be precleared, either through the federal Attorney General or the United States District Court in the District of Columbia, to ensure that new changes do not negatively impact minority voting strength.

The number of these districts for the state Senate increased from five to nine, from which eight African-American candidates were elected (234-236). The authors stated that “these increases in African-American representation would not have occurred if Louisiana had not been subject to the preclearance requirement of the Voting Rights Act” (266). Since then, the total of African-American legislators has remained stable. In 2007, the legislature had a total of 32 African-American members, 23 in the House and nine in the Senate (see Table 1.1).

### **Previous Studies on African-American Legislators in Louisiana**

The literature on African-American legislators in Louisiana is extremely limited. Only two studies have discussed the roll-call behavior of these legislators (Harmel, Hamm, and Thompson 1983; Herring 1990). No previous studies have addressed the campaign strategies of these legislators, or the incorporation of African-American legislators, and there is only limited information on the legislative influence of African-American legislators provided in the studies mentioned above.

Harmel, Hamm, and Thompson (1983), in their analysis of black vote cohesion in the 1977 sessions of the lower chambers of the Louisiana, Texas, and South Carolina legislatures, found that white legislators in Louisiana and Texas voted in agreement with black legislators on at least 65 percent of all bills, whereas white legislators in South Carolina agreed on less than 45 percent of all bills. In Louisiana and Texas black legislators united with progressive whites to pass legislation, which was not the case in South Carolina. In South Carolina white and black legislators were split on issues important to blacks. They also reported that black legislators in Louisiana and Texas voted in agreement in their roll-call votes more often than their white counterparts. In

South Carolina agreement among black legislators in their roll-call votes was very low, whereas white legislators exhibited a higher level of vote agreement (187-188). The authors concluded that the political culture of the state is important when examining interracial agreement among black and white legislators (190-191).

Herring (1990) examined the roll-call voting behavior of state senators in Alabama, Georgia, and Louisiana regarding bills important to black constituents (e.g., bills concerning civil rights and liberties, tax policies, education, and welfare). Using roll-call data from the 1980 sessions, she found that both white and black senators in Louisiana and Georgia, regardless of the racial composition of their districts, were supportive of these bills. In Alabama, however, only black senators were supportive of these bills while white senators were unwilling to address issues of concerns to blacks in their districts. Similar to Harmel, Hamm, and Thompson (1983), Herring suggested that these differences lie in the political culture of the state. She states that in the post-VRA era Louisiana has had a tradition of including blacks in political coalitions and Georgia, in particular Atlanta, has been influenced by the “chamber of commerce progressivism” that has helped to ameliorate racial divisions. Unfortunately, Alabama has not been as accommodating to black political power and resistance from white conservatives on issues relevant to blacks remained a problem (751). She suggests that white politicians in Alabama may view blacks as a “threat to political control” and thus “avoid appearing responsive to black interests” (752).

Menifield, Shaffer and Brassell (2005), in *Politics in the New South: Representation of African-Americans in Southern State Legislatures*, provide only a brief descriptive analysis of representation in the Louisiana state legislature. Although they

only offer limited descriptive findings, they do suggest that the increase of African-American legislators in Louisiana is reflected in a corresponding growth in the number of these legislators occupying leadership positions on legislative committees. Their brief treatment of the Louisiana state legislature does not provide a comprehensive examination of the influence of African-American legislators in the Louisiana state legislature.

### **Outline of the Study**

This chapter has presented an introduction to the study of African-American state legislators, explained the purpose of the study, and discussed the existing literature related to African-American legislators in Louisiana. Chapter Two offers the review of literature on political dimensions related to African-American legislators. Chapter Three explains the data and methodology employed for the study. Chapter Four will provide a comparison of the social backgrounds of African-American and white legislators in the Louisiana House of Representatives (e.g. tenure, gender, occupation, education, and party). Chapter Five will provide the results of the three salient dimensions of representation, political incorporation, and campaign strategies. First, the chapter will assess the level of substantive representation provided to black constituents by African-American legislators. It also will examine service to constituents, bill introduction, co-sponsorship, roll-call votes, and bill passage. Second, the chapter will provide an analysis of the political incorporation of these legislators. The study is interested in exploring whether leadership positions (e.g. chairmanships, committee assignments, and seniority) are a predictor of influence on agenda setting and legislative success. Third, the chapter will report on the type of campaign strategies employed by House members.



Specifically, the study will explore the campaign strategies of these legislators to determine whether there is a linkage between their campaign strategy and their influence in the legislature. Chapter Six will consist of a set of conclusions drawn from the research project.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Review of Literature**

#### **State Policy-Making**

After the Voting Rights Act of 1965, political change came to all levels of politics in the South. This was especially true of southern state legislatures. As African-Americans began to occupy more state legislative seats, the expectations that these lawmakers would address issues of importance for African-Americans grew. Demands that blacks serve in state legislatures intensified as African-Americans viewed them as critical to their substantive representation (Campbell and Feagin 1975; Davidson and Grofman 1994; Grofman and Handley 1991). Davidson and Grofman (1994, 16) explain that the entrance of blacks into political institutions makes black constituents more trusting of the political system and confident that their needs and concerns will be addressed.

Does descriptive lead to substantive representation? If so, are African-American legislators providing substantive representation consistent with Pitkin's (1967) definition? As noted earlier, substantive representation should entail the introduction of bills, service to the African-American community, addressing African-American's needs and concerns, contact with and service to constituents, and resources provided to their districts. Haynie (2001, 24-26) indicates that in order to provide substantive representation for African-Americans, a legislator must introduce bills that focus on "black interests." Bill introduction provides an indicator of the commitment on the part of the legislator to advance certain interests.

This study explores "black interest" bills introduced in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. As mentioned, the LLBC introduced legislation following Hurricane Katrina in

the policy areas of (1) emergency preparedness, (2) housing, (3) commerce, (4) insurance, and (5) voting rights. The issue of voting rights was identified by the LLBC to have explicit racial implications.<sup>5</sup> The displacement of African-Americans following Hurricane Katrina led the LLBC to introduce a number of bills that addressed this issue. The series of bills introduced were designed to ensure that blacks would not be disenfranchised in the 2006 New Orleans municipal elections and those thereafter. The issue of voting rights had clear racial dimensions and legislation placed on the agenda and introduced by the LLBC received strong opposition from white legislators and the governor.

### **Defining “Black Interest”**

Historically, social scientists have provided measures of group interests that are generalizable to all racial and ethnic groups, based on socioeconomic indicators such as unemployment, poverty rates, levels of income, and educational levels (see Sargent 1991; Swain 1993). However, in the case of African-Americans, specific measures are important to consider when defining “black interest.” The legacy of slavery, disenfranchisement of blacks, and different political cultures among African-Americans are important in deciphering “black interest.” These factors provide background in determining what policy areas are important to African-Americans. Past studies that have examined policy issues important to African-Americans have focused on social welfare, health care, and/or education (Walton 1985; Nelson 1991; Haynie 2001) or on civil rights issues (Miller 1990; Herring 1990).

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<sup>5</sup> Robert Scott, “Black Caucus Presses Agenda,” *Times-Picayune* (New Orleans), March 31, 2006, pg. A3.

To measure policies relevant to “black interest,” political scientists have used opinion polls and surveys. Several studies have asked race-specific questions to measure the policy interest of African-Americans (see Dawson 1994; Gurin, Hatchett, and Jackson 1989). The 1984-1988 panel of the National Black Election Study provided significant results regarding what policy issues were important to African-Americans. The study showed that 88 percent of African-Americans agreed that the U.S. government should work to improve the position of blacks. Also, the study reported that 82 percent of African-Americans were in favor of increased government spending for the creation of jobs, and 79 percent favored more spending on Medicare.

In contrast, the American National Election Studies (ANES) conduct national surveys of the entire American electorate. The 2004 study showed that 46 percent of black respondents agreed that blacks should overcome prejudice and work their way up the ladder without special favors. In comparison, 75 percent of white respondents agreed. In the survey, 49 percent of black respondents agreed that the government should make every effort to improve the social and economic position of blacks, whereas only 17 percent of white respondents agreed. In addition, 35 percent of black respondents agreed that federal spending on welfare programs should be increased, 27 percent agreed it should be decreased and 39 percent agreed it should be kept the same. In contrast, 20 percent of white respondents agreed spending should be increased, 33 percent agreed it should be decreased and 46 percent agreed it should be kept the same.

In their study of the racial divide on national policy issues, Kinder and Winter (2001) analyzed the racial differences between blacks and whites in four alternative approaches through which the racial divide could be understood: (1) Social Class- the social class of

blacks and whites, (2) Principles- the fundamental principles of blacks and whites, (3) Social Identity- attachment to their own racial group and resentment toward other groups, and (4) Audience- the audience to which blacks and whites address their opinions. They posited that these alternative approaches would help to explain the racial divide between blacks and whites (440).

Kinder and Winter found that the racial divide is promoted by two conditions: (1) the racial inequality between blacks and whites and (2) the social welfare of blacks. First, with regard to racial inequality, the authors found that racial resentment among whites is directed toward blacks that benefit from racial policies that provide preferences to blacks such as school integration and affirmative action. Further, they found that blacks were more likely than whites to identify with their own racial group. This translated into blacks being more supportive of establishing racial preferences in college admission and hiring. The authors found that surprisingly the alternative of *social class* had no effect on opinions for either blacks or whites, but rather, *principle* and *social identity* had the greatest effect on the racial divide (446-448).

Next, Kinder and Winter found that social welfare policies such as government health insurance, temporary assistance for needy families, and unemployment benefits were not favored by most whites. The alternative of *principle* had the most significant effect on the opinions of whites and blacks. The authors indicated that the principles blacks and whites support are used to advance their interests. Most whites believed that the government should not play a significant role in the social and economic welfare of blacks. Conversely, the vast majority of blacks believed that it is the responsibility of the

government to provide social welfare programs. The alternatives of *social class* and *audience* had a minimal impact on the opinions of whites and blacks (448-449).

The following hypotheses concerning the introduction of “black interest” bills by African-American legislators will be tested:

**Hypothesis 1:** African-Americans are more likely than white legislators to introduce “black interest” bills.

**Hypothesis 2:** White Democrats are more likely than Republicans to introduce “black interest” bills.

**Hypothesis 3:** African-Americans that hold leadership positions are more likely than African-Americans that do not hold such positions to introduce “black interest” bills.

**Hypothesis 4:** Senior African-Americans are more likely than junior African-Americans to introduce “black interest” bills.<sup>6</sup>

Although studies of bill introduction pinpoint the commitment of the legislator to advance certain interests, the co-sponsorship of bills also serves as an important gauge to ascertain whether the legislator is committed to advancing certain legislation. Schiller (1995) suggests that co-sponsoring legislation is an important indicator of legislators’ behavior. Specifically, it identifies which issues, and the response to those issues, that the legislator wants to be associated with. This is an important measure of legislators’ issue preferences.

Krehbiel (1995) explains that typically legislators co-sponsor legislation they predict will have policy consequences and is more likely to be enacted. However, legislators do co-sponsor legislation to build alliances within their parties. He also argues that co-sponsoring legislation is “not significantly different from other more explicitly outcome-based forms of legislative behavior, such as roll-call voting” (910). Co-

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<sup>6</sup> For hypotheses 3 and 4, the study will perform a similar analysis for white legislators to examine if there are any racial differences in these relationships.

sponsorship of bills can serve as a predictor in the roll-call behavior of legislators identifying whether they will be in support of the bill.

Absent from previous studies of African-American state legislators is evidence of co-sponsorship of their bills by white legislators, and especially whether there is a party divide in that support. While Canon (1999) discusses the sponsorship and co-sponsorship of bills by both African-American and white legislators in the U.S. House, his analysis does not provide a breakdown of party affiliation of white legislators that co-sponsor legislation introduced by African-American legislators (193-194).

The following hypotheses concerning co-sponsorship of and roll-call votes on “black interest” bills by African-American legislators will be tested:

**Hypothesis 5:** African-Americans are more likely than white legislators to co-sponsor “black interest” bills.

**Hypothesis 6:** White Democrats are more likely than Republicans to co-sponsor “black interest” bills.

**Hypothesis 7:** African-Americans are more supportive than white legislators in their roll-call votes on “black interest” bills.

**Hypothesis 8:** White Democrats are more supportive than Republicans in their roll-call votes on “black interest” bills.

### **Influence Districts**

Studies of “influence districts” have mostly analyzed legislative behavior at the congressional level (Cameron, Epstein and O’Halloran 1996; Swain 1993; Overby and Cosgrove 1996; Hutchings, McClerking and Charles 2004). These studies have explored the effects of black constituency size in minority-black districts and whether the racial composition in these districts impact legislative decisions made by white representatives. The effect of influence districts is mainly discussed in the realm of racial redistricting, in

the context of the debate about whether the intentional drawing of majority-minority districts to elect minority representatives has the perverse effect of benefiting Republicans by enhancing their electoral prospectus in the adjacent “bleached districts.” As stated previously, Swain (1993) argues that the purposeful drawing of districts to elect racial and ethnic minorities will have a negative effect on substantive representation, and argues that influence districts can provide more support for black interests, especially if these districts lead to the election of more Democrats regardless of race (210-212).

According to Cameron, Epstein, and O’Halloran (1996), in their study of racial redistricting and black representation in the U.S. House following the 1990 census, they found that within influence districts there is a “generally positive relationship between the percentage of blacks and the representation of black interests” (795). The authors utilized the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights (LCCR) scores to measure legislators’ support for minority issues. They hypothesized a positive relationship between the percentages of blacks in nonmajority-minority districts and the representation of black interests. The authors posited that the critical level and/or threshold effect needed for white legislators to respond to black interests was 20-30 percent for the black voting age population (BVAP).<sup>7</sup> Levels in excess of 30 percent (i.e. 30-50% BVAP) had an adverse effect on support for black interests because white legislators in these districts were found to vote more conservatively. Cameron et al. concluded that neither white Democrats nor Republicans represented black interests as well as black Democrats, however white Democrats were more supportive than their Republican counterparts (807).

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<sup>7</sup> Also see Bullock 1981; McClain and Stewart 1995; Lublin 1997.



Overby and Cosgrove (1996) advance a similar argument. In their study of the voting behavior of white U.S. House incumbents following the 1992 redistricting cycle, they found that changes in the racial composition of the district also led to a change in roll-call liberalism. Using the 1992-1993 Committee on Political Education (COPE) scores, the authors found a significant relationship between representatives' COPE scores and the change in their districts' black population. Among white southern Democrats, they found that there was a "general trend among white Democratic MCs toward more liberal voting behavior" (549). Due to "creative cartography" that extracted black constituents from Republican districts to protect the continuity of white Democratic districts, Republicans were not affected by the change in the racial composition of their districts. Therefore, Republicans did not have to be responsive to black interests due to the marginal black constituency size (549).

Hutchings, McClerking and Charles (2004), in a recent study that examined the relationship between district racial composition and the voting patterns of white congressmen, found that the increased percentage of blacks in a district had an influence on legislators' support for black interests. Using LCCR voting scores of the U.S. House of Representatives from the 101<sup>st</sup> (1989-1990), 102<sup>nd</sup> (1991-1992), and 103<sup>rd</sup> (1993-1994) Congress, they found that black population size had its most significant influence among southern white Democrats. However, the correlation between black constituency size and support for black interests did not provide consistent support across districts. Districts that exceeded the critical level of 30 percent were less likely to vote in accordance with black interests. Democrats from the North were supportive of black interests regardless of the percentage of blacks in their districts. In comparison, southern

Republicans were not responsive to black interests despite the percentage of blacks in their districts, even when there was a substantial number. Surprisingly, northern Republicans were supportive of black interests unlike their southern counterparts. The authors indicate that this finding can be largely attributed to northern Republicans seeking an electoral advantage in the mobilization of black voters.

Combs, Hibbing and Welch (1984) in their study of the roll-call behavior of white U.S. House members' responsiveness to black constituents' interest examine the interaction between urbanization and black constituency size. Using Conservative Coalition support scores from 1973 through 1980, they measured the ideological position of each members voting record. They found that in southern districts as the black percentage increased, Democrats exhibited conservative voting patterns. Southern Democrats were most responsive when there was a substantial black voting age population (40 percent or more). Southern Republicans showed highly conservative voting patterns, regardless of the percentage of blacks. In the North a linear and positive relationship was exhibited. In these districts white representatives, both Democrat and Republican, were more liberal in their roll-call voting as the percentage of blacks increased.

Whitby and Gilliam (1991) in their study of the voting behavior of white southern Democratic incumbents in the U.S. House found that these members were responsive to the proportion of blacks in their districts. The authors hypothesized that long-term Democratic incumbents would be more liberal in their voting on civil rights measures due to the mobilization and empowerment of a growing black constituency size in their districts. Using LCCR voting scores of white Democratic incumbents for the 91<sup>st</sup> through

100<sup>th</sup> Congresses from the 11 states that were members of the Confederacy, they found that southern Democrats elected prior to the 1960s were less responsive in their roll-call votes, although members elected after that were not.<sup>8</sup> They concluded that the higher the percentage of blacks, the greater the support for civil rights agenda.

The above studies dealing with white U.S. House members have shown that the presence of black voters in their districts influences their responsiveness to minority concerns. This literature involving southern representatives has consistently shown that party affiliation and region matters. In districts with a substantial black voting age population support from white Democrats varied, whereas Republicans have not been responsive. According to Hutchings, McClerking, and Charles (2004, 451), “Some southern Democrats with large African-American constituencies are remarkably responsive to these voters whereas others frequently neglect their interests.”

As stated, this study argues that based on the previous literature, the effect of the increased percentage of black voters within a white legislator’s district is still ambiguous. The curvilinear relationship is not consistently found (Keech 1986; Cameron, Epstein, and O’Halloran 1996; Hutchings, McClerking, and Charles 2004), and although there have been consistent findings that southern Republicans have not been responsive to minority concerns regardless of the size of the African-American presence in their districts (Combs, Hibbing and Welch 1984; Whitby and Gilliam 1991; Overby and Cosgrove 1996; Whitby 1997; Whitby and Krause 2001), the same studies have shown that for southern white Democrats there is a positive relationship but support varies.

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<sup>8</sup> The 11 states of the Old South used in this article are Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia.

Therefore, we expect a linear and positive relationship between white Democrat responsiveness and the percentage of black voters.

The following hypothesis concerning the percentage of black voting-age population (BVAP) and support for black interests will be tested:

**Hypothesis 9:** White Democrats support for “black interest” bills is positively related to the size of the BVAP in their districts.

### **Campaign Strategies of Black State Legislators**

Since the 1960s the type of campaign strategy employed by black politicians has been important in their election to office. According to Anderson (1997), black legislators that emerged immediately after the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 were considered “race representatives.”<sup>9</sup> These legislators practiced a form of politics that was intended to place matters of race at the forefront of political decisions. The main goal of these representatives was to advance the interest of the African-American community. White representatives in the South were not responsive to black concerns, therefore the African-American representatives needed to be.

The dominant campaign strategy employed by blacks in the 1960s was called “insurgency.” According to Persons (1993, 45), insurgency constitutes “direct challenges to the prevailing political order; explicit attacks and criticisms on elected officials, institutional processes.” Insurgent campaigns were successful in electing African-Americans to local and state positions in majority black election districts or jurisdictions.

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<sup>9</sup> The term “race representative” was used by St. Clair Drake and Horace Clayton in their classic ethnographic study, *Black Metropolis* (1945).

Fenno (2003), in a study of African-American representation in the U.S. Congress, divided African-American members into a “pioneer” cohort and a “contemporary” cohort. He found that black legislators from the “pioneer” cohort, Louis Stokes of Cleveland and Barbara Jordan of Houston, provided better organizational leadership and a stronger symbolic connection to the black community than those in the “contemporary” cohort, Ckaka Fattah of Philadelphia and Stephanie Tubbs-Jones of Cleveland. Because the members of the “pioneer” cohort were the first African-Americans elected to Congress from their respected cities or states, Fenno specifies that this provided a symbolic connection (i.e. racial identity) to their constituents, and thus, these legislators actively attempted to represent the interest of the African-American community. Members of the “contemporary” cohort, however, did not agree with the representational strategy of the “pioneer” cohort (242). Despite majority black districts being an effective medium for the electoral success of African-American politicians, the “contemporary” cohort believed that African-American politicians must move beyond an approach that uses race as the foundation of their representational strategy and adopt a strategy with a mainstream agenda.

Fattah and Tubbs-Jones could be said to have followed an alternate strategy, generally known as “deracialization.” This strategy emerged in the early 1970s. Deracialization is a strategy designed to appeal to a broader audience. According to Barker and Jones (1994, 321), deracialization is “the practice of blacks articulating political demands in terms that are not racially specific so that they appeal to a broader group and presumably do not alienate those who are predisposed to oppose black

efforts.”<sup>10</sup> The practice of deracialization as a campaign strategy allows black candidates to avoid alienating the white electorate with race-specific campaign tactics.

Some scholars of deracialization suggest that this campaign strategy can become problematic (Barker and Jones 1994; Perry 1996). In a study of deracialization focusing on ten black political campaigns from 1989 to 1992, Perry (1996) found that deracialization may be counterproductive. He questions the quality of representation that black constituents would receive from black politicians that win through deracialized campaigns. Because deracialization is inconsistent with black candidates focusing on race-related issues, these candidates might often neglect the interest of their black constituents and thus alienate this part of the electorate.

Many scholars have proposed that a middle ground is needed (Canon 1999, Haynie 2001). Although difficult, they think it is important to find a middle ground where legislators acknowledge the significance of racial issues, yet continue to address issues that appeal to the mass public. This middle ground approach attempts to balance both the race representative and deracialization approach. Canon (1999) indicates that black legislators must develop a “balancing perspective which notes the importance of racial difference, but makes an explicit effort to address both sets of concerns” (48).

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<sup>10</sup> The concept of deracialization emerged in 1973 when Charles Hamilton first used it at a meeting of the National Urban League. Hamilton argued that to gain the necessary white support, blacks must address social issues with universal appeal. One such issue was “full employment,” which was considered an important issue facing both blacks and whites. Later, Hamilton (1977) used the concept in a paper presented to the Democratic party. This time, he advised presidential candidates to focus on issues that appealed across racial lines to gain more voter support. He urged civil rights groups and the Democratic party to advocate “deracialized solutions,” such as national health care and full employment. William J. Wilson (1990) took a similar position, advising the Democratic party to advocate “race-neutral programs” and avoid “race specific agendas” to put together winning presidential election coalitions.

Canon's (1999) work builds on previous studies of campaign strategies and representation styles of black members of the U.S. House. In his study, Canon identifies two types of candidates. First, he identifies a more traditional African-American candidate who practices a "politics of difference," someone who views race as a fundamental component in making political decisions for African-Americans. Canon states "a politics of difference calls for proper remedies for previous discrimination and exclusion" (3-4). Next, he identifies a new style of African-American candidate that practices a "politics of commonality," in which politics is viewed in biracial and nonracial terms. These legislators are concerned with finding a balance between black issues and broader issues. Canon asserts that a "politics of commonality" strives to provide equal protection of the laws without special treatment for any single group" (3).

In his study, Canon theorizes that the type of racial representation provided in a district will depend on the racial composition of the candidate pool in the Democratic primary, which he refers to as "supply-side" theory.<sup>11</sup> For example, he proposes that if only black candidates run, then a new-style black candidate will win. On the other hand, if a white candidate and at least one traditional black candidate run, then the traditional black candidate will win (94). He makes these projections based on the campaign style of black candidates following the changing racial context of electoral districts after the 1990s rounds of redistricting.

Canon examines the linkage between campaigning and governing. He posits that the campaign strategy of the candidate will determine their political influence in the

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<sup>11</sup> The supply-side theory examines the process of candidate emergence and how individual politicians respond to the changing electoral context imposed by new district lines and subsequently how the context of the district will shape electoral choices and outcomes in a given district (Canon 1999, 93).

legislature. Canon found that candidates that practiced a “politics of difference” were less likely to serve in leadership positions in the legislature or enjoy success in the legislature. On the other hand, candidates that practiced a “politics of commonality” were more likely to serve in leadership positions in the legislature and were able to co-sponsor bills that passed (34-51).

The following hypothesis concerning the linkage between campaign strategy and influence in the legislature will be tested:

**Hypothesis 10:** Black candidates who advocate race-specific policies in their campaigns are less likely to serve in leadership positions, chair committees, and have their legislation enacted than black candidates who campaign on biracial themes.

### **Committee Assignments**

Committees play an important role in the legislative process. They are influential in setting the political agenda and deciding when a piece of legislation will reach the full legislature (Hall 1987). The committee assignment that a legislator receives can affect their ability to influence the policy making process. Many times, legislators seek membership on committees that reflect their individual interests (Steward 1992). This study will explore whether African-American legislators are assigned to committees that have an influence on “black interest” bills.

According to Jewell and Patterson (1977, 183-186), the method of selecting members of the legislature to serve on committees is important in understanding how influential the committee or the committee members are in the legislature. Committee assignments in state legislatures are becoming more specialized with the appointment of legislators to specific committees based on their professional background and policy expertise. For instance, legislators may be appointed to committees that align with their



educational background or area of practice for attorneys. Also, legislators request to be assigned to committees that are relevant to the interests salient in their districts.

However, there is no guarantee they will receive the assignment. Also, the obtainment of chairmanships and committee assignments may not have a direct impact on the ability of these members to influence the policy-making process according to Hamm and Hedlund (1990).

In many states, specialization has altered the committee structure and the responsibility of appointing and removing committee chairmen and members. These functions are controlled by the governor or legislative leaders in the chambers (Rosenthal 1981; Hamm, 1983; Hamm and Hedlund 1990). Rosenthal (1981, 163) states that “top leaders largely control the appointment of chairman and members of standing committees.” As a result of these powers, he indicates that legislative leaders determine the influence of these committees by the legislators assigned to them. In the Louisiana House of Representatives, the Speaker appoints the chair, vice chair, and members of the seventeen standing committees except for the committee on Appropriations, which is appointed by the Governor (<http://house.louisiana.gov/H-Reps/standcommittees.htm>).

The following hypothesis concerning committee assignments and legislative influence will be tested:

**Hypothesis 11:** African-Americans are more likely than white legislators to sit on committees that address “black interest” bills.

## **Political Incorporation**

A major theme in this study is that increased descriptive representation should lead to more substantive representation for African-Americans. The mere presence of black legislators, of course, does not guarantee that they will provide substantive representation. And substantive representation does not guarantee influence in the legislative process. After African-Americans are elected to the state legislature, it is important for them to become incorporated into the legislative body in order to have a substantial influence in the policy-making process. Political incorporation is the degree “to which a group has been able to achieve a position from which strong and sustained influence can be exercised” (Brown, Marshall, and Tabb 1984, 241). This study explores the political incorporation of black legislators by examining the extent to which they have obtained leadership positions and committee chairmanships in the legislature.

The incorporation of black legislators is viewed as a precondition for them to influence public policy in the legislature. High levels of incorporation are considered to be vital for them to accomplish their political goals and objectives. Browning, Marshall, and Tabb (1984, 27) state:

A group that has achieved substantial political incorporation has taken a major step toward political equality. It is in a position to articulate its interests, its demands will be heard, and through the dominant coalition it can ensure that certain interests will be protected, even though it may not win on every issue. The group will have successfully opened the system and gained the kind of ability to make its interests prevail that other groups have already achieved.

Browning et al. discovered that in a sample of California cities there was a positive relationship between political incorporation and increased governmental responsiveness to African-American interests. They found that the incorporation of blacks into the

dominant coalition provided an increase in the use of minority contractors, the appointment of more minorities to city commissions, the creation of police review boards, and improved city services in minority neighborhoods (265).

Most of the research on minority group political incorporation has been conducted, like that of Browning et al., at the municipal level. Political incorporation in a city or urban context tends to relate positively to governmental responsiveness to African-American interest. Behr (2000), in his study of the substantive benefits received from the growth of minority elected officials at the municipal level, found that minority political incorporation had a significant impact on minority city employment.

In their study of Texas and South Carolina legislatures, Hamm, Harmel, and Thompson (1983) suggest that it is important for African-American legislators to obtain positions of leadership and/or have seniority within their legislatures to be effective. African-Americans that held leadership positions and seniority in their legislatures were influential in the introduction of bills and the passage of legislation. The authors concluded that leadership status and seniority are related to legislative success in state legislatures.

As discussed earlier, Nelson (1991) in a study of 45 lower state legislative chambers, concluded that an increase in minority incorporation in a state legislature does not translate into an increase in policies that benefit minorities. He examined incorporation by constructing “influence indices” for African-Americans, Hispanics, and women taking into account their party leadership positions and committee chairmanships. He found that minority incorporation did not increase policy responsiveness for these minority groups. In fact, having more African-Americans in leadership positions tended

to have a negative effect on education and social service expenditures. According to Nelson, education expenditures tend to be lower in state legislatures that had more blacks in leadership positions. Also, greater numbers of blacks in leadership positions across states led to declines in per capita expenditures for social services (114-116). Nelson concluded that the lack of legislative influence by black legislators is propelled by the “conservative era in which we live...opposition to taxes, human resource services, and blacks” (132).

As noted previously, Haynie (2001) in a study of African-American legislators in multiple legislative sessions across five states constructed a “political incorporation index” to measure the incorporation of African-Americans within state legislatures. This index accounted for leadership positions, seniority, and strategic institutional positions such as those on prestigious and powerful committees (66). Unlike Nelson’s (1991) measure of incorporation, Haynie asserts that the inclusion of prestigious and powerful committee assignments in his index is important because legislators assigned to these committees exercise a significant degree of power and have more influence in the legislature. He states that “prestige committees are a small group of powerful and highly coveted committees that deal with appropriations, taxation and budgeting issues, and the rules and procedures of the legislature” (67-68). Haynie reports, however, that black legislators are seldom assigned to these committees, but rather are assigned to committees that address unemployment, health care, and education (42).

Haynie’s findings provided mixed results. He found that higher levels of incorporation did not affect the likelihood of the passage of bills introduced by black legislators that held leadership positions. Therefore, political incorporation did not

translate into legislative success. Likewise, he indicates that the increase in the number of black legislators exerted no meaningful impact on governmental responsiveness in terms of state spending on health care, education, and social welfare.

However, while he found that the increase of blacks in state legislatures did not lead to legislative success, the mere presence of blacks in state legislatures did lead to an increase in leadership positions for black legislators and the introduction of more “black interest” bills. Haynie uses these findings to argue that “the presence and growth of African-American representation in government has indeed had noticeable and meaningful policy consequences” (107). This assessment of his findings, however, is flawed because the growth and incorporation of African-American legislators did not lead to legislative success of “black interest” bills. And, while the mere presence of African-American legislators may have led to the introduction of more “black interest” bills, Haynie does not present findings to suggest that these legislators have had a notable impact on the policy-making process.

The following hypotheses concerning whether leadership positions lead to the influence of public policy and the passing of legislation will be tested:

**Hypothesis 12:** African-Americans are less likely than white legislators to receive prestige/power committee assignments.

**Hypothesis 13:** African-Americans that hold leadership positions are more likely than African-Americans that do not to achieve passage of “black interest” bills.

While the growth and incorporation of African-American legislators has led to the introduction of more “black interest” bills, previous research by Bratton and Haynie (1999) has shown that despite these achievements African-American legislators are less successful than whites in the passage of their bills. Blacks are more likely than whites to

introduce bills in the policy areas of employment, health care, and welfare policies that are usually favorable to black interests. Bills introduced in these areas receive resistance and often do not garner much support in the legislature, which is majority white. The authors indicate that this finding “raises questions about the fairness of the representative system” but they do not believe that the low passage rate among African-American legislators is “due to racial discrimination” (672). Bratton and Haynie concluded that the subject matter of bills is important in determining the likelihood of success and those introduced by African-American legislators may be at ideological odds with white legislators.

The following hypothesis concerning legislative success of African-Americans will be tested:

**Hypothesis 14:** African-Americans are less likely than white legislators to achieve passage of their “black interest” bills.

### **Summary**

This chapter provided a review of the pertinent literature exploring the three salient dimensions outlined in chapter 1. A comprehensive review of the literature is important to advance the body of knowledge related to African-American legislators in the Louisiana House of Representatives. Also, the chapter proposes hypotheses to test in the study. Derived hypotheses are consistent with previous literature.

Chapter Three explains the data and methodology employed for the study.

### **Chapter 3**

#### **Data and Methodology**

A number of data collection techniques will be used in this research. The principal tools for collecting information for this study are the examination of documents reporting bill introductions, sponsorship and co-sponsorship of bills, roll-call votes, and bill passage, and also interviews with African-American legislators in Louisiana.

The identification of “black interest” bills can be problematic. According to Haynie (2001, 19), “determining or designating a group’s interests is usually a complex and complicated undertaking.” Studies have employed different criteria to identify bills specifically related to black interests (see, e.g., Canon 1999, 21-31; Nelson 1991, 117; Haynie 2001, 19-24; Herring 1990, 743). Canon (1999) and Haynie (2001) identify black interest bills using a dichotomous approach of distinguishing between objective and subjective indicators of black interests. While African-Americans have made progress, Canon (1999) explains “there are still clearly identifiable black interests, in both objective terms and subjective terms” (22).

Objective indicators are based on socioeconomic factors such as unemployment, poverty rates, levels of income, and educational levels. These specific policy areas show a disparity between African-Americans and whites and thus are considered specifically related to black interests (Haynie 2001, 20). Subjective indicators of black interest are less obvious. Both Canon (1999, 26-31) and Haynie (2001, 23) relied on opinion polls and surveys. They gathered information from these sources to identify the issues most important to African-Americans (i.e. affirmative action and quotas, improvement in the position of blacks in society, and welfare programs). Haynie suggests that these issues

be used to provide clarity in identifying race-specific issues important to African-Americans (23).

Because the line between objective and subjective measures of black interests are often blurred, Haynie (2001, 24) argues that black interests sometime take into account both objective and subjective components. Similarly, Canon indicates that objective and subjective interests may be thought of as “needs” or “wants” (22), and he argues that “wants are very strongly rooted in needs” (26). It is important to assess whether the bill improves the economic and social condition of African-Americans to identify it accurately as a black interest bill. In his analysis, Haynie defined black interest bills as those “that prohibit discrimination in voting, housing, education, and unemployment” (24).

Nelson (1991, 117) and Herring (1990, 743) admittedly used more subjective measures to identify “black interest” bills. Nelson indicates that he focused on issues in the policy areas of education, social welfare, and health-care because they were most important to minorities. Herring states, “In making the determination as to what roll-calls involve black interests, the net was cast rather broadly at first” (743). She examined roll-call votes in the three broad policy areas of redistribution of wealth, civil rights and liberties, and issues with an overt racial component (744).

Canon (1999) indicates that there is considerable ambiguity in the identification of black interests. He argues that roll-call voting indices have been “worthless as an indicator of behavior that addresses constituents’ racial wants” (31). Roll call indices, such as that provided by the Americans for Democratic Action (ADA), base their roll-call votes on issues that reflect liberal interests rather than more specifically black interests.



Further, roll-call votes limit the ability to measure racial representation completely. They do not show the legislative efforts of representatives that work to introduce legislation that address black interests (172). This study will utilize voting rights legislation introduced in the post-Hurricane Katrina legislative sessions to avoid such ambiguity. We consider these bills to be unambiguously related to black interests.

Following the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina a significant number of African-American voters were displaced from the New Orleans area. Disproportionally more blacks than whites were displaced. There was extensive flooding in the Lower 9<sup>th</sup> ward and New Orleans East, which were areas heavily black in population. Whites that resided in certain areas of New Orleans also were greatly impacted by the storm. Logan (2006) reported that some predominantly white neighborhoods in the northwest part of New Orleans (i.e., Lakeview) were entirely flooded (2). The disparity in governmental attention to the whites, mainly those in the Lakeview Planning District, and blacks stem greatly from the fact the majority of black residents lived in impoverished conditions and their uncertainty of recovery, whereas the majority of white residents were mostly homeowners in areas with low rates of poverty (4). Logan suggested that the disparity in attention was a result of the affected Whites being more affluent. After the storm, the demographics of the city changed vastly. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, blacks comprised 67.3 percent (325,947) of the city and whites 28.1 percent (135,956).<sup>12</sup> More than 73 percent of those displaced were estimated to be black (Sadow 2006). African-Americans were disproportionately displaced in Houston, Atlanta, and other cities,

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<sup>12</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census: *Statistical Abstract of the U.S. 2000* U.S. Census, Washington, DC 2000.

whereas, whites migrated to cities within the state of Louisiana.<sup>13</sup> It was also estimated that by March 2006 only half the city's displaced residents had returned, although a smaller portion of the city's African-American population returned.<sup>14</sup> In September of 2006, the *American Community Survey* (U.S. Bureau of the Census) estimated that blacks comprised 58.8 percent (131,441) of the city, and whites 36.8 percent (82,107). The black population plummeted more than 190,000 citizens, whereas the white population fell more than 53,000 citizens.

With the 2006 New Orleans municipal elections forthcoming, especially the New Orleans mayoral election, thousands of displaced black voters were faced with being disenfranchised in these elections, which posed a threat to black political leadership. Vanderleeuw and Liu (2001) report that the number of New Orleans' black elected officials has increased significantly since the 1970s. The city of New Orleans elected its first black mayor, Ernest "Dutch" Morial, in 1977 and black candidates have won all of the mayoral elections thereafter. In addition, New Orleans has had a black majority on the city council since 1986 and on the school board since 1988 (see Engstrom and Caridas 1991; Liu and Vanderleeuw 1999; Liu 2001).

Lui and Vanderleeuw (1999), in a study of white voters' support for black candidates in New Orleans from 1980-1994, found that New Orleans municipal elections are typically characterized by racially polarized voting. Given this racial division, the relative presence of African-Americans in the city's electoral base is critical in the continuation of black political control. The absence of a black voting majority could

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<sup>13</sup> William H. Fray, Audrey Singer, and David Park, "Resettling New Orleans: The First Full Picture from the Census," *The Brookings Institution*, September 7, 2007.

<sup>14</sup> The Associated Press, "Voting Rights for the Displaced Is the Rally Cry in New Orleans," *The New York Times*, April 12, 2006 (Sunday), Section 1, p.24.

change the racial composition of the city's elected officials. Facilitating the participation of displaced black voters in these and subsequent elections therefore was a major concern of African-American legislators. The issue of voting rights was identified by the LLBC to have explicit racial implications. Members of the LLBC introduced a number of bills that unambiguously addressed the ability of blacks to have access to the ballot for these elections. The issue of voting rights was a focal point of post-Hurricane Katrina black politics.

In this study, voting rights bills introduced in the post-Hurricane Katrina legislative sessions were identified as "black interest" bills. While the number of such bills was not extensive, the 22 bills introduced that related to voting rights clearly addressed a major concern of blacks.<sup>15</sup> Bills ranged from allowing those displaced to vote absentee by mail to setting up early-voting polling stations around Louisiana (see Appendix A.3). Bills that facilitated access to the ballot or impeded voting were included. We identify these bills as explicitly concerning the voting rights of displaced residents, especially African-Americans. Roll-call votes included in the analysis are pooled from the post-Hurricane Katrina legislative sessions to determine the legislative support or non-support for facilitating voting by the displaced residents of New Orleans.

### **Bill Introduction**

The bills introduced by African-American and white legislators in the House of Representatives will be examined to assess their responsiveness to issues important to African-Americans. Because bill introduction allows these legislators the opportunity to make an impact on the legislative process, an examination of the type of bills they

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<sup>15</sup> The selection of bills was facilitated by consultation of a member of the LLBC.

introduce will provide a gauge of their commitment to place “black interest” bills on the legislative agenda (Haynie 2001; Whitby 2002). The study posits that African-American legislators will be more likely than white legislators to introduce black interest bills. Also important is the internal variation among African-American legislators. The study will attempt to identify whether African-American legislators that hold leadership positions or have more seniority in the legislature are more likely to introduce black interest bills.

As stated, voting rights legislation that was introduced to help assure that blacks would not be disenfranchised in the 2006 New Orleans municipal and subsequent elections will be identified as “black interest” bills and the racial identification of their primary sponsors and co-sponsors will be recorded. Amendments that strengthened or weakened these bills will also be examined.

### **Dependent Variable**

The dependent variable will be measured in terms of the number of voting rights related bills introduced by each legislator in the Louisiana House (BINTRO). In the post-Hurricane Katrina legislative sessions 22 such bills were introduced. Because the dependent variable is an event count, the study will use negative binomial regression, a technique employed by Bratton and Haynie (1999) and Whitby (2002) in their studies of bill introduction. The unit of analysis is the individual legislator.

### **Independent Variables**

The independent variables used to examine bill introduction (BINTRO) will be the race of legislator (RACE), their party identification (PARTY), leadership positions (LEADER), and seniority (SEN). The independent variable of race of legislator (RACE)

will be coded as a dummy variable, “1” for an African-American legislator and “0” for a white legislator.<sup>16</sup> The independent variable of party identification (PARTY) will be coded as a dummy variable, “1” for white Democrat and “0” for white Republican.<sup>17</sup> The independent variable of leadership positions (LEADER) will be coded as a “1” if a legislator holds a party leadership position, specifically speaker pro tempore, assistant majority/minority leaders or whips, or a chairperson/vice-chairperson position of committees, and “0” if they do not. Seniority (SEN) will be measured as the number of consecutive years the legislator has served in the state legislature.<sup>18</sup>

The study will estimate four models of bill introduction. These models will address hypotheses 1, 2, 3, and 4. Hypothesis 1 applies to all legislators. Hypothesis 2 applies to only white legislators. Hypotheses 3 and 4 apply to only African-American legislators.

**Hypothesis 1:** African-Americans are more likely than white legislators to introduce bills supportive of voting rights.

**Model 1:**  $BINTRO = a + B1 (RACE)$

**Hypothesis 2:** White Democrats are more likely than Republicans to introduce bills supportive of voting rights.

**Model 2:**  $BINTRO = a + B1 (PARTY)$

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<sup>16</sup> In the Louisiana House, for both the 2006 1<sup>st</sup> Extraordinary Session and 2006 Regular Session there were a total of 104 occupied seats. One seat was vacant. There were 23 African-Americans and 81 whites.

<sup>17</sup> No African-American Republicans served in the Louisiana state legislature during these sessions.

<sup>18</sup> In the Louisiana state legislature, African-American legislators that hold leadership positions are not necessarily those with the longest tenure in office. Junior African-American legislators are just as likely as senior African-American legislators to obtain a leadership position. All leadership positions are assigned by the Governor.

**Hypothesis 3:** African-Americans that hold leadership positions are more likely than African-Americans that do not hold such positions to introduce bills supportive of voting rights.

**Model 3:**  $BINTRO = a + B1 (LEADER)$

**Hypothesis 4:** Senior African-Americans are more likely than junior African-Americans to introduce bills supportive of voting rights.

**Model 4:**  $BINTRO = a + B1 (SEN)$

### **Bill Co-Sponsorship**

Bill co-sponsorship will be used to measure House members support or non-support for voting rights bills before they reach the floor for a final vote. Schiller (1995) suggests that co-sponsoring legislation is a useful indicator of legislators' behavior by showing support for a specific piece of legislation. The co-sponsorship of legislation facilitating access to the ballot serves as a measure of legislators' responsiveness to voting rights.

### **Dependent Variable**

The dependent variable will be measured in terms of the number of voting rights bills co-sponsored by legislators (COSPON). In the post-Hurricane Katrina legislative sessions two of 22 bills concerning voting rights were co-sponsored. The study will record which members co-sponsored each proposed bill. Co-sponsored bills will be identified as those with more than one legislator's name attached. Because the dependent variable is again an event count, the study will use negative binomial regression. The unit of analysis is the individual legislator.

## **Independent Variables**

The independent variables used to examine co-sponsorship (COSPON) will be the race of legislator (RACE) and their party identification (PARTY). The independent variable of race of legislator (RACE) will be coded as a dummy variable, “1” for an African-American legislator and “0” for a white legislator. The independent variable of party identification (PARTY) will be coded as a dummy variable, “1” for a white Democrat and “0” for a white Republican.

The study will estimate two models of bill co-sponsorship. These models will address hypotheses 5 and 6. Hypothesis 5 applies to all legislators. Hypothesis 6 applies to only white legislators.

**Hypothesis 5:** African-Americans are more likely than white legislators to co-sponsor bills supportive of voting rights.

**Model 1:**  $COSPON = a + B1 (RACE)$

**Hypothesis 6:** White Democrats are more likely than Republicans to co-sponsor bills supportive of voting rights.

**Model 2:**  $COSPON = a + B1 (PARTY)^{19}$

## **Roll-Call Votes**

Roll-call votes will be analyzed to assess the support that African-American legislators and white legislators provide for African-Americans’ voting rights concerns through their roll-call votes on all actions related to voting rights. The study will focus on support for this legislation as a measure of substantive representation.

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<sup>19</sup> The study did not estimate models for leadership and seniority. In the post-Hurricane Katrina legislative sessions legislators who held leadership positions or seniority neither sponsored nor co-sponsored much legislation. Legislators that did sponsor or co-sponsor bills tended to be younger and did not hold leadership positions.

## **Dependent Variable**

The dependent variable will be constructed from the roll-call votes on voting rights legislation (ROLLCALL). This study will consider the recorded votes on all actions, which include reconsiderations, conference reports, motions, amendments, and votes on final passage of bills. In the post-Hurricane Katrina legislative sessions there were only 11 recorded votes on the 22 bills (see Appendix A.4). Sixteen of the bills introduced died in the House and Governmental Affairs committee. Each of the contested roll-call votes will be analyzed individually through contingency tables in which the race of the representatives, party of the white representatives, and the BVAP for white Democrats' districts will be related to divisions in the vote. These results will be examined for patterns in the data. In the regression models, the dependent variable will be based on the percentage of votes on voting rights bills on which the legislator was pro-voting rights, that is, in favor of facilitating access to the ballot. Ordinary least squared regression will be used. The unit of analysis is the individual legislator.

## **Independent Variables**

The independent variables used to examine roll-call voting behavior (ROLLCALL) will be the race of a legislator (RACE), their party identification (PARTY), and the percentage of the voting age population in their district that was black (BVAP). The independent variable of race of legislator (RACE) will be coded as a dummy variable, "1" for an African-American legislator and "0" for a white legislator. The independent variable of party identification (PARTY) will be coded as a dummy variable, "1" for a white Democrat and "0" for a white Republican. The independent variable of (BVAP), as noted above, will be coded as the percentage of the voting age population within a



legislator's district that was black.<sup>20</sup> This variable will be a continuous, interval-level variable.

The study will estimate three models of roll-call votes. The models will address hypotheses 7, 8, and 9. Hypothesis 7 applies to all legislators. Hypotheses 8 and 9 applies to only white legislators.

**Hypothesis 7:** African-Americans are more supportive of voting rights than white legislators in their roll-call votes on measures to facilitate voting.<sup>21</sup>

**Model 1:**  $ROLLCALL = a + B1 (RACE)$

**Hypothesis 8:** White Democrats are more supportive of voting rights than Republicans in their roll-call votes on measures to facilitate voting.

**Model 2:**  $ROLLCALL = a + B1 (PARTY)$

**Hypothesis 9:** White Democrats support for voting rights is positively related to the size of the BVAP in their districts.

**Model 3:**  $ROLLCALL = a + B1 (BVAP)$

### **Bill Passage**

The study examines whether voting rights bills passed or not in the Louisiana House. We identify bill passage as an important measure to determine the relative rate of passage for voting rights bills introduced by African-American and white legislators.

### **Dependent Variable**

The dependent variable will be constructed based on the percentage of voting rights bills introduced by each legislator that passed in the House (LEGSUC). The study will

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<sup>20</sup> The BVAP data were obtained from the Office of Reapportionment of the Committee on House and Governmental Affairs. These data capture the BVAP as reported in the 2000 U.S. Census.

<sup>21</sup> All African-American House members serve majority black districts.

perform cross-tabulations as a primary tool of analysis. The unit of analysis is the individual legislator.

### **Independent Variables**

The independent variables used to examine legislative success (LEGSUC) will be race of legislator (RACE) and leadership positions (LEADER). The independent variable of race of legislator (RACE) will be coded as a dummy variable, “1” for an African-American legislator and “0” for a white legislator. The independent variable of leadership positions (LEADER) will be coded as a “1” if a legislator holds a party leadership position, specifically speaker pro tempore, assistant majority/minority leaders or whips, or a chairperson/vice-chairperson position of committees, and “0” if they do not.

The study will estimate two models of legislative success. The models will address hypotheses 13 and 14. Hypothesis 13 applies to all legislators. Hypothesis 14 applies to only African-American legislators.

**Hypothesis 13:** African-Americans are less likely than white legislators to achieve passage of their bills supportive of voting rights.

**Model 1:** LEGSUC x B1 (RACE)

**Hypothesis 14:** African-Americans that hold leadership positions are more likely than African-Americans that do not to achieve passage of their bills supportive of voting rights.

**Model 2:** LEGSUC x B1 (LEADER)

## Interviews

As stated earlier, Canon (1999) indicates that a variety of data sources are needed to provide an accurate understanding of substantive representation. This study employs interviews as a data collection method to gauge the attitudes and behavior of African-American legislators. Interviews are used as an exploratory measurement technique. The interview responses are also used to test hypotheses. Also, they are used in the development of hypotheses and to supplement other data sources.

African-American legislators in the House of Representatives during the 2007 regular session were interviewed.<sup>22</sup> Eighteen of the twenty-three legislators were interviewed, a response rate of 78 percent.<sup>23</sup> Two face-to-face interviews were conducted during the 2007 regular legislative session and sixteen more after the session. Two of the interviews after the session were conducted by telephone, all the others were in person.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> The statistical analysis of the legislative actions of Louisiana House members is performed on those that served in the House in the immediate sessions following Hurricane Katrina. Interviews were conducted with only those in the 2007 regular session. This is important to note because there have been newly elected House members.

<sup>23</sup> In addition, two African-American senators were also interviewed in the face-to-face interviews.

<sup>24</sup> A letter was sent to each African-American legislator to request an interview. Shortly after the letters were sent, each member was contacted by telephone as a follow-up procedure for the purpose of scheduling appointments for the interviews. In the first round of calls to legislative offices, June 11, 2007, many of the legislative assistants suggested to call in the days prior to wanting to conduct the interview. Some did take a message and indicated that they would give it to the legislator. Also, they suggested sending the legislator an email since many were in session during this period. A second round of calls was made to legislative offices and the LLBC office on June 14 to inform legislators of the preliminary visit during the 2007 legislative session. In addition, Bob Brown of the University of the New Orleans Office of Governmental Affairs was contacted to help facilitate interviews with legislators. A third round of calls was made July 9-10 to schedule interviews through the dates July 16-27. The researcher traveled to

According to Beamer (2002, 89-90), although single-state studies lack generalizability, those that achieve a high sample-to-population ratio, as this study does, enjoy the advantages of high internal validity and are unlikely to overlook critical respondents.

Legislators were interviewed using semi-structured interviews. As described by Berg (1998, 61), “this type of interview involves the implementation of a number of predetermined questions...in a systematic and consistent order, but the interviewers are allowed freedom to digress; that is, the interviewers are permitted to probe far beyond the answers.” Each legislator is asked the same series of questions. Depending on responses from legislators, follow-up questions are asked for clarity and further discussion on a topic. Beamer (2002, 92) indicates that the researcher should ask more broad questions at the beginning of the interview to allow the respondent to speak freely and follow-up with more specific questions. He suggests that this approach permits the interview to stay more structured and focused.

The semi-structured interviews were around 45-60 minutes in length. Face-to-face interviews were mainly conducted at the legislator’s office. However, interviews also conducted in coffee shops and restaurants. Once each interview was complete, each audiotape was transcribed and reviewed.

### **Interview Questions**

The questions listed in the interview schedule, provided in Appendix A.2, focused on the three salient dimensions of the study. First, interview questions 1-8 probed legislators’ ability to provide substantive representation, especially as it related to black constituents. The responses were important in understanding the substantive

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Alexandria, Baton Rouge, Lafayette, Lake Charles, New Orleans, Opelousas, Ruston, and Shreveport for interviews.

representation provided to constituents in the post-Hurricane Katrina period. This section of the interview schedule began with questions related to services and resources that African-American legislators provide to constituents and other entities in their districts. The interview schedule then proceeded to questions related to the recovery efforts following Hurricane Katrina.

Second, interview questions 9-10 were asked to explore whether there was a link between campaign strategies and legislative influence. These questions were used to test and provide additional information related to the following hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 10:** Black candidates who advocate race-specific policies in their campaigns are less likely to serve in leadership positions, chair committees, and have their legislation enacted than black candidates who campaign on biracial themes.

Finally, interview questions 11-13 were asked to examine the importance of committee assignments and leadership positions and whether these positions facilitated the influence of public policy and the passage of legislation. These questions were used to test and provide additional information related to the following hypotheses:

**Hypothesis 11:** African-Americans are more likely than white legislators to sit on committees that address “black interest” bills.

**Hypothesis 12:** African-Americans are less likely than white legislators to receive prestige/power committee assignments.

### **Summary**

This chapter has outlined the types of data collected and procedures used to test the hypotheses specified. The next chapter will provide a comparison of the social backgrounds of African-American and white legislators in the Louisiana House of Representatives (e.g. tenure, gender, occupation, education, and party).

## **Chapter 4**

### **2007 Demographic Profile of the Louisiana House of Representatives**

Members of the Louisiana House serve four-year terms.<sup>25</sup> There are a total of 105 seats in the House. In the 2007 regular legislative session all but one of those seats were occupied.<sup>26</sup> There were 22 African-Americans, 81 whites, and one Latino among the members.

This chapter provides a demographic profile of these members. It will note the party affiliation, tenure in the legislature, educational achievement, type of occupation, and gender of each legislator.<sup>27</sup> The information collected also provides a comparison of African-American and white legislators. These racial comparisons are important in discovering the similarities and differences among these legislators as they perform their duties in the legislature. According to Button and Hedge (1996, 200), “similarities among legislators are a prerequisite for accommodation while differences often result in discrimination and conflict.”

#### **Party Affiliation**

Democrats were the majority party in the Louisiana House. Table 4.1 reports that 60 of the 104 occupied seats, 58 percent, were held by Democrats. Republicans held 43 seats, 41 percent, and an Independent held the remaining seat. All 22 African-Americans

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<sup>25</sup> Members serve four-year terms with a term limit of three terms. The 2007 legislative elections following the regular session are the first to apply this limitation. Term limits were implemented during a term of office that began on or after January 8, 1996. Those legislators that served multiple terms prior to term limit restrictions were not affected ([http://house.louisiana.gov/H\\_Reps/H\\_Reps\\_TermsCmte.asp](http://house.louisiana.gov/H_Reps/H_Reps_TermsCmte.asp)).

<sup>26</sup> District 58 seat was vacated due to the retirement of African-American Roy Quezaire, Jr.

<sup>27</sup> The age of all legislators is not available.

were Democrats. These members occupied 21 percent of the seats in the House during this session. In contrast, a majority of the white legislators, 53 percent, were Republicans. The Independent was white.

**TABLE 4.1**  
**Political Affiliation of Members in the Louisiana House, 2007**

Political Affiliation	Total House Membership		African-American Membership		White Membership		Latino Membership	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Democrats	60	(58)	22	(100)	37	(46)	1	(100)
Republicans	43	(41)	0	(0)	43	(53)	0	(0)
Independent	1	(1)	0	(0)	1	(1)	0	(0)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>104</b>		<b>22</b>		<b>81</b>		<b>1</b>	

Source: <http://house.louisiana.gov/>, 2007.

### **Tenure in the Legislature**

Haynie (2001, 29) found that experience in the legislature provided state legislators with knowledge and expertise regarding legislative rules and procedures, committee systems, and policies. A majority of Louisiana House members had prior experience in the legislature. Table 4.2 shows that 25 percent of House members had served in the legislature for 13 years or more, 18 percent between 9-12 years, and 24 percent between

five to eight years.<sup>28</sup> Thirty-three percent of the House members were serving in their first term.

**TABLE 4.2**  
**Legislative Tenure of Members in the Louisiana House, 2007**

Legislative Tenure	Total House Membership	African-American Membership	White Membership	Latino Membership
	N %	N %	N %	N %
1-4 YEARS (1 <sup>st</sup> Term)	34 (33)	11 (50)	22 (27)	1 (100)
5-8 YEARS (2 <sup>nd</sup> Terms)	25 (24)	6 (27)	19 (23)	0 (0)
9-12 YEARS (3 <sup>rd</sup> Terms)	19 (18)	1 (5)	18 (22)	0 (0)
13+ YEARS (4 <sup>th</sup> or more Terms)	26 (25)	4 (18)	22 (27)	0 (0)
TOTAL	104	22	81	1

Source: <http://house.louisiana.gov/>, 2007.

The tenure of African-American House members was not comparable to their white counterparts. Eleven of the twenty-two (50%) African-Americans were serving in their first term. Eighteen percent of African-Americans had served 13 years or more, while five percent had served between 9-12 years, and 27 percent between five to eight years. In comparison, white House members had more experience in the legislature. Twenty-seven percent of white legislators had served 13 years or more, 22 percent between 9-12

<sup>28</sup> Legislators that served 13+ years were recorded up the 2007 regular session (see Table 4.2).



years, 23 percent between five to eight years, and 27 percent was in their first term, as shown in Table 4.2.

### **Educational Achievement**

According to Jewell and Patterson (1977, 70), “no characteristic of American legislators is better documented than the fact that they are among the most educated occupational groups in the United States.” Louisiana house members are no exception. All members graduated from high school. Table 4.3 shows that seven percent of House members had some college, 37 percent had earned a college degree, and 57 percent had acquired advanced degrees.

**TABLE 4.3**  
**Educational Achievement of Members in the Louisiana House, 2007**

Level of Education	Total House Membership		African-American Membership		White Membership		Latino Membership	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Some College	7	(7)	3	(14)	4	(5)	0	(0)
College Graduate	38	(37)	4	(18)	34	(42)	0	(0)
Advanced Degree JD/MS/MBA/Ph.D./MD	59	(57)	15	(68)	43	(53)	1	(100)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>104</b>		<b>22</b>		<b>81</b>		<b>1</b>	

Source: <http://house.louisiana.gov/>, 2007.

African-American House members compared favorably to their white counterparts. Table 4.3 shows that the majority, 68 percent, of African-Americans possessed advanced degrees, 18 percent had earned college degrees and 14 percent had some college. In

comparison, 53 percent of white House members had advanced degrees, 42 percent possessed college degrees, and five percent had some college, as shown in Table 4.3.

### **Occupation**

The National Conference of State Legislators reports that attorneys constitute the largest occupational group in state legislators across the United States. However, since the mid-1970s this occupational group has been decreasing, being replaced by business ([http://www.ncsl.org/programs/legismgt/about/demographic\\_overview.htm](http://www.ncsl.org/programs/legismgt/about/demographic_overview.htm), 2007). This is the case in the Louisiana House in which there is a predominance of members in the professions of business or law. Table 4.4 reports that businessmen constitute a plurality of all House members, 44 percent of them. The profession of attorney ranked second at 26 percent. Comparing African-American and white House members, the profession of business was most prevalent among white House members (51%), whereas a plurality of African-American House members was lawyers (45%). Only 23 percent of African-American House members was businessmen and 20 percent of white House members was attorneys. Other professions were not well represented among House members. Only nine percent reported their occupation to be legislators and six percent reported they were educators.

**TABLE 4.4**  
**Occupation of Members in the Louisiana House, 2007**

Occupation	Total House Membership		African-American Membership		White Membership		Latino Membership	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Business	46	(44)	5	(23)	41	(51)	0	(0)
Attorney	27	(26)	10	(45)	16	(20)	1	(100)
Educator	6	(6)	2	(9)	4	(5)	0	(0)
Legislator	9	(9)	3	(14)	6	(7)	0	(0)
Agriculture	2	(2)	0	(0)	2	(2)	0	(0)
Medicine	1	(1)	0	(0)	1	(1)	0	(0)
Other	13	(13)	2	(9)	11	(14)	0	(0)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>104</b>		<b>22</b>		<b>81</b>		<b>1</b>	

Source: <http://house.louisiana.gov/>, 2007.

### **Gender**

Thomas and Welch (1991, 453-455), in their study of the impact of gender differences in the political activities in state legislatures, found that male and female legislators perform similar activities in the legislature, such as serve on the same number of committees and display comparable patterns of voting behavior. Using data from a 1988 survey of members in the lower houses of twelve state legislatures, they concluded the only difference between male and female legislators was the type of committees they were assigned to and their policy priorities. They state, “women continue to be

disproportionately found on the committees dealing with health and welfare” and “underrepresented on committees overseeing business and economic matters” (455). Also, the authors indicate the differences in priorities “are not large” but women give a higher priority to women’s issues (454).

There was a sizeable gender gap in the Louisiana House. Table 4.5 shows that the majority of legislators, 83 percent, was male. Women constituted 17 percent of the House. Examining the gender and racial breakdown in the House, white males constituted 66 percent of the total membership compared to 15 percent for African-American males. In comparison, white females constituted 12 percent and African-American females six percent.

**TABLE 4.5**  
**Gender Differences of Members in the Louisiana House, 2007**

Gender	Total House Membership		African-American Membership		White Membership		Latino Membership	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Male	86	(83)	16	(73)	69	(85)	1	(100)
Female	18	(17)	6	(27)	12	(15)	0	(0)
TOTAL	104		22		81		1	

Source: <http://house.louisiana.gov/>, 2007.

## **Summary**

This chapter presented demographic profiles of Louisiana House members during the 2007 regular legislative session. In sum, the average African-American legislator was a male Democrat, serving in their first term, and well educated with a career in law. In comparison, the white legislator was a male Republican, having served multiple terms, and well educated with a career in business.

Chapter Five provides the test for the hypotheses specified in chapters 2 and 3.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Substantive Representation, Political Incorporation and Campaign Strategies**

This chapter examines the three salient dimensions of substantive representation, political incorporation and campaign strategies. First, we explore the multiple components of substantive representation to determine whether African-American legislators provide this type of representation to their constituents. These components include, but are not limited to, service to their constituents, contact with constituents, resources provided to their districts, bill introduction, the co-sponsorship of bills, and roll-call voting. The passage of legislation introduced by African-American legislators will also be examined.

Second, the chapter examines the political incorporation among African-American legislators. We provide an overview of the organizational structure of the Louisiana House to examine institutional leadership patterns and assess to the extent to which African-American members hold leadership positions that are important in setting the legislative agenda and the passing of legislation (i.e., Speaker of the House, speaker pro tempore, majority/minority leaders or whips and their assistants, and chairperson/vice-chairperson of committees).

Finally, the chapter analyzes the campaign strategies of the African-American House members. We are interested in examining the type of campaign strategies these legislators have employed to gain or retain office, and whether the types of campaign strategies employed affect the legislative area.

### **Background**

On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina ravaged the New Orleans metropolitan area. The hurricane flooded 80 percent of the city of New Orleans and forced many

residents to evacuate. African-Americans constituted a disproportional number of the evacuees, resulting in widespread speculation that the city might no longer have a majority African-American population at that time.

African-American legislators, even those displaced by Hurricane Katrina, were summoned to be responsive to the needs and concerns of displaced residents, especially African-Americans.<sup>29</sup> According to a senior state senator, “The day after the levees broke, I can remember going to the shelters...then coming to the office and pulling up voting returns and then I would call the Governor [Kathleen Blanco] and [U.S. Senator] Mary Landrieu and tell them remember the people that voted for you. We only have 30 days to bring our citizens back, and if not back in 30 days they are not coming back.”<sup>30</sup> A large number of the African-Americans displaced in Houston, Atlanta, and other places were unable to return due to the limited resources provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the lack of available housing, and inflated rental costs.

In the post-Hurricane Katrina legislative sessions, African-American legislators joined ranks to help those displaced. As stated by a junior House member, “After Katrina, black legislators and the LLBC [Louisiana Legislative Black Caucus] as a whole acted collectively. This tragedy showed how important it was for black legislators to not act individually but recognize that our actions as a group are going to be paramount in helping displaced residents.” The large base of New Orleans African-American legislators (House and Senate) shaped the political agenda of the LLBC. After the

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<sup>29</sup> In 2005, eight of the 23 African-American House members were from New Orleans. Those legislators were Cedric Richmond, Austin Badon, Karen Carter, Cheryl Gray, Jalila Jefferson-Bullock, Juan LaFonta, Charmaine Marchand, and Arthur Morrell.

<sup>30</sup> In this chapter, African-American senior legislators constitute those serving more than one term. Junior legislators constitute those serving in their first term.

storm, the needs and concerns of black constituents shifted somewhat from the traditional “black interest” issues. The majority of legislation introduced in the post-Hurricane Katrina legislative sessions by the LLBC addressed the following areas: (1) emergency preparedness, (2) housing, (3) commerce, (4) insurance, and (5) voting. These policy areas were identified by the LLBC as important in providing substantive representation to their constituents.

### **Substantive Representation**

The exploration of substantive representation began by identifying the services that African-American House members believed were important to provide to constituents. According to Jewell (1982, 137-140), legislative services are a key element of representation because they provide a public good to constituents and keep legislators in good favor with constituents. Legislators provided extensive knowledge regarding the services they believed were important. During the interviews it became clear that two major themes emerge as important services: (1) helping displaced residents return to Louisiana and (2) accessibility of the legislator. These were followed by the more traditional services identified by African-American legislators: (3) jobs, (4) health care, and (5) education.

### **The Return of Displaced Residents**

The majority of African-American legislators, especially those from New Orleans, responded that helping displaced residents return to Louisiana was a vital service to provide to constituents. As stated by a New Orleans junior legislator, “The services that are most important right now are helping people return to their homes. Many people in my district are concerned with the Road Home monies. They live in Houston or Atlanta



and want to come home.”<sup>31</sup> Another junior legislator, also from New Orleans, said, “All services are important right now. The Road Home Recovery is big on the agenda. This will facilitate displaced residents to return home.” Consistently, legislators from New Orleans indicated that the return of displaced residents was an important service. Also, legislators not from New Orleans agreed it was important to facilitate the return of New Orleans residents. A junior legislator from northern Louisiana stated, “My main concern is making sure people can return home. We want to rebuild New Orleans to what it once was. For now, Road Home is an important service.”

### **Accessibility**

Another major theme that materialized in the interviews was the accessibility of legislators. According to a junior legislator, “The first thing is accessibility; our constituents have the ability to speak with us. A lot of people email, but they would like to speak to us one on one. When elected, a lot of the general public view you as a celebrity.” Another junior legislator concurred, “I would say that the service that is important is accessibility...it is important for constituents to share their issue [with their representative]. It is important to be accessible.” The consensus from legislators was that if they are accessible, it would provide an advantage in addressing the needs and concerns of constituents. The constituents identify the services and/or resources that are

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<sup>31</sup> The Road Home program was established by Governor Kathleen Blanco, the Louisiana Recovery Authority, the Office of Community Development and the Louisiana state legislature to provide funding to displaced residents to facilitate their return to Louisiana ([www.doa.louisiana.gov](http://www.doa.louisiana.gov)). The Road Home program is made up of four programs: Homeowner Assistance Program, Workforce and Affordable Rental Housing Programs, Homeless Housing Program, and Developer Incentives. On May 30, 2007, the U.S. Housing and Urban Development Secretary, Alphonso Jackson, issued a press release (No. 06-058) approving \$4.6 billion to fund the program created by the state of Louisiana. The Louisiana state legislature authorized \$750,000,000 in additional monies to supplement the funding from the U.S. Housing and Urban Development office.

most important. As discussed by a senior legislator after acknowledging that accessibility was important after the storm, “I believe that restoring conditions after Hurricane Katrina is the most important service. Blacks, in particular, have many problems so to ask what services are important, that is a hard one.”

### **Traditional “Black Interests” Services**

As stated earlier, previous research by Bratton and Haynie (1999) found that African-American legislators are more likely than white legislators to address issues in the policy areas of employment, health care, and social welfare policies, which address important needs of their districts. As stated by a senior legislator, “If I were to give you an outline of services, it would be jobs, education, and healthcare. For blacks these are the most important services.” According to a junior legislator with both local and state political experience:

There are a number of services that are important. The districts represented by black legislators are disproportionate [in their need of services] compared to those represented by white legislators. Therefore, black legislators have so many needs...African-American representatives mainly represent poor districts so childcare, medical, transportation...I don’t know, you name it.

Another junior legislator explained, “I think that health, employment and education are the issues that we have to hit hardest. Without a strong job force, educational system, it is difficult for blacks to address these areas, specifically to get jobs.”

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, helping displaced residents return to Louisiana and accessibility to constituents were identified as top priorities for African-American legislators. Employment, health care, social welfare programs, and education remain the core of services that African-American legislators believe are important to provide to constituents.

## **Time Devoted to Services**

The majority of African-American legislators responded that a substantial amount of their time was devoted to services for constituents in their districts. As stated by a senior legislator, “I spend a lot of time on services. I would say about half my day is dedicated to the people of my district.” A junior legislator responded:

I come to my [district] office a lot. I come to my office more than, I believe, other legislators go to their office. Sometimes I answer the phone...I would say more than normal. Sometimes, I answer the phone and say Rep. [John Doe] office and they say can I speak to Rep. [John Doe] and I say this is him. And they are surprised.

Judging from the interviews, there did not appear to be great variation in the time devoted to services for constituents. All legislators devoted a significant amount of time to these duties. According to a senior legislator, “I spend a lot of time working on issues related to my district. More than the salary calls for. Representing the people is a full-time job, although we are considered part-time.”<sup>32</sup>

When asked how much of their staff members’ time is devoted to services for constituents, many of the legislators responded that they had few staff members. According to a senior legislator, “I have two legislative assistants, but no full staff. A lot of the burden falls on me to work every facet of the job.” A junior legislator agreed, using a business analogy:

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<sup>32</sup> Each legislator in the Louisiana House receives an annual salary. In the 2006-2007 fiscal year, each legislator’s annual salary was \$16,800. The Speaker of the House receives a higher salary at \$32,000 annually and the Speaker Pro Tempore \$24,500 annually. In addition to their salary, legislators receive a per diem while in session, in attendance at an approved conference/convention, and in committee meetings. Effective July 1, 2007, the per diem rate is \$138 per day (Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana-<http://www.la-par.org>).

When you are in business and you have a product, if your product is to reach a large number of people you will need to have more staff. One person is not enough to keep the product up. I represent 30,000 people and more staff is needed...In order to be effective you need quality people working with you.

The majority of legislators responded that they do not have a staff, but rather a single legislative assistant. Also, the estimate of time ranged from 20-40 hours per week. As stated by a senior legislator, “My assistant does a good job. She works about 30 hours a week.”

### **Contact With Constituents**

As stated above, many African-American House members responded that accessibility is important to provide to constituents in their districts. When asked how often their constituents write letters, email, or call to address concerns, many of the legislators responded that their constituents, especially black constituents, mainly call or walk-in. According to a senior legislator, “Basically phone and personal contact [are how they address their concerns]. When they want to see Rep. [John Doe] they come in.” As stated by a junior legislator, “They normally visit the office. We get a lot of walk-ins. I do also get letters from constituents to voice their opinion about an issue.” The methods of contact did not vary greatly among legislators. The most consistent methods of contact were phone calls and walk-ins. Few legislators responded that constituents emailed or wrote letters to them.

When asked what issues were most frequently raised by their constituents, many of the legislators stated issues such as assisting constituents apply for the Road Home program, helping them find jobs, and identifying how to address medical concerns. Some

did identify new issues, but explained that they were more often local government matters than state. For example, a junior legislator from New Orleans explained:

After the hurricane, it was trash pick-up, housing needs, insurance, and now its, Rep. [John Doe] can you please get these people to pick up this trailer from in front of my house. Many even reported drug trafficking in the trailers, so I am trying to expedite the removal of trailers that are not being used.

Another junior legislator stated, “Most of the issues that people call about should be handled from local government...80 percent are city government issues...Some are money issues, like paying their light bill. With the elderly, I have actually helped.”

Issues related to the incarceration of family members or friends were also common issues raised by constituents. A senior legislator responded, “I would say I can’t pinpoint one, it is a variety of things. Mostly social security, kid in jail, family member in Angola [Louisiana State Penitentiary], adjust from Angola to community. A lot of people know I have a [business] so I can provide jobs.”

When asked what methods of response are used to address concerns, many of the legislators responded that it is their preference to personally call constituents. As stated by a senior legislator, “I try to respond to every call. Sometimes my assistant will address the issue but she passes the concerns of each call by me.” For legislators that received a high volume of walk-ins, many responded that they try to make time or they schedule an appointment with the constituent. According to a junior legislator, “For drop-ins, if I am here I see most of them. If I am not here, I call them. I do have a legislative aide, but I like to respond.” Another junior legislator responded, “I normally call all the people back. I think it is important for them to hear from me. If I represent you, you need to hear my voice.”

When asked what resources they have been able to provide to their districts, again many of the legislators identified resources related to helping displaced residents return home, housing, health care, jobs, and insurance. However, a junior legislator responded, “I try to do what is asked from constituents. I can’t address every issue but I try. I work with a number of organizations [in the community] right now to provide more resources.” Another junior legislator provided a similar response stating, “Whatever they need. Mainly, whatever comes about.”

### **Bill Introduction**

In order to determine whether African-American legislators introduce legislation on behalf of blacks generally, legislators were asked did they introduce legislation that they believed addressed the interests of not only blacks in their district, but blacks in general. An overwhelming majority of legislators responded that they introduce legislation for blacks in general. According to a senior legislator:

I introduce legislation to help all blacks. Being in the legislature for a period of time, you begin to understand that most bills introduced by blacks will have an impact on blacks not only in their district but in all districts where blacks are the majority.

This response was echoed by a junior legislator who stated, “I try to introduce legislation that will benefit all constituents. I do keep in mind that I largely serve the blacks in my district.” Another junior legislator stated, “I introduce bills for blacks in general. I think that it is important. What I have learned is that if you write a good piece of legislation, it will have a spill over affect, from your district to other districts.”

There were instances, for example, when legislators would respond that the interests of whites in their districts were as important as black constituents. A senior legislator responded, “Not only blacks but also whites. If I do introduce legislation that will impact

blacks, it is because their interest is most needed. But the interests of the whites in my district are just as important.” A junior legislator explained, “I normally do not introduce legislation with only blacks in mind. My legislation, personally, in my opinion can help all. Just because I represent a black district does not mean that I will only introduce legislation for blacks.”

### **African-American Legislators’ Assessment of Hurricane Katrina**

When asked to explain their assessment of the governmental response to the Hurricane Katrina evacuation efforts, legislators provided responses for each level of government.

#### **Local Government**

All levels of government shouldered the blame for the evacuation efforts following Hurricane Katrina. Much of the initial blame was directed toward local government in New Orleans, specifically Mayor Ray Nagin. According to a senior legislator:

If I had to assess or give a grade I would say local [government] gets a ‘C’. That is based on the fact that New Orleans had never had to order a mandatory evacuation and putting a hurricane plan in effect is difficult especially under the poverty conditions of New Orleans.<sup>33</sup>

A senior legislator also noted:

I don’t think [Mayor] Nagin was well equipped to handle a situation like this. In all fairness not many people are. But, the fact that he didn’t have the foresight to order a mandatory evacuation tells me he didn’t understand the responsibility of ensuring the safety of the people. There were buses, Amtrak agreed to help, vehicles at our disposal, we should have gotten people out.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the median household income was \$27,133 in New Orleans and 27.9 percent of the population lived below the poverty line; U.S. Bureau of the Census: *Statistical Abstract of the U.S. 2000* U.S. Census, Washington, DC 2000.

<sup>34</sup> In New Orleans, 27.3 percent of households do not have a car. One in every seven citizens in New Orleans does not have access to vehicles; Alan Berube and Steven

Mayor Ray Nagin declared a voluntary evacuation on Saturday, August 27, but it was not until the following day, Sunday, August 28, that he ordered a mandatory evacuation for the New Orleans metropolitan area. The mandatory evacuation was the first in New Orleans history. He held a press conference accompanied by Governor Kathleen Blanco where he stated, “We’re facing the storm most of us have feared...this is going to be an unprecedented event.”<sup>35</sup> After Mayor Nagin ordered the mandatory evacuation, he further suggested that the remaining residents without vehicles should find rides with family and friends to evacuate the city. Others should evacuate to the New Orleans Superdome for shelter.

A senior legislator was critical of Mayor Nagin stating:

Katrina was a case study for the rest of the world [of] what not to do. Local government dropped the ball, especially since they had a simulated hurricane evacuation done some time prior to the hurricane. From my understanding, it predicted what would happen if a real hurricane hit New Orleans.

In 2004, FEMA hired a private company, IEM, Inc. of Baton Rouge, to simulate an eight day emergency response drill for a fictional Category 4 hurricane hitting New Orleans. The fictional storm was named Hurricane Pam. The simulated hurricane produced winds up to 130 miles per hour and breached the levees similar to Hurricane Katrina. In the

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Raphael, “Access to Cars in New Orleans,” *The Brookings Institution*, September 15, 2005, [http://www.brookings.edu/metro/20050915\\_katrinacarstables.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/metro/20050915_katrinacarstables.pdf).

<sup>35</sup> Gordon Russell, “Nagin Orders First-Ever Mandatory Evacuation of New Orleans,” *Times-Picayune*, August 28, 2005, [http://www.nola.com/newslogs/breakingtp/index.ssf?/mtlogs/nola\\_Times-Picayune/archives/2005\\_08\\_28.html#074564](http://www.nola.com/newslogs/breakingtp/index.ssf?/mtlogs/nola_Times-Picayune/archives/2005_08_28.html#074564).



fictitious evacuation over a million residents needed shelter for over six months. Another thousand residents needed to be rescued.<sup>36</sup>

In defense of Mayor Nagin and other local officials' efforts, a junior legislator explained:

No one can be prepared for what happened in New Orleans. I commend Mayor Nagin for what he was able to accomplish once he got a grip on things. I don't understand the fact we had the buses, but didn't utilize them. I still haven't heard the reason for that...No one has ever faced a situation like this before.

A senior state senator made it clear that "There was a gap between local and state politics. He [Mayor Nagin] said we need help and we need you to help us."

### **State Government**

On Saturday, August 27, Governor Kathleen Blanco requested that President George W. Bush declare a state of emergency for the state of Louisiana. In the request, Governor Blanco wrote, "I have determined that this incident is of severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the State and affected local governments, and that supplementary Federal assistance is necessary to save lives, protect property, public health, and safety."<sup>37</sup>

The miscommunication between state and local government was evident in the early stages of the evacuation efforts. As a junior legislator explained:

The State, from the Governors' stand point, I think that everyone was not on the same page. The mayor was waiting for the Governor and the

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<sup>36</sup> Anita Kumar, "One Question Builds: Where is FEMA?," *St. Petersburg Times*, September 3, 2005, p. A1.

<sup>37</sup> Press Release, August 27, 2005, "Governor Blanco Asks President to Declare an Emergency for the State of Louisiana due to Hurricane Katrina," <http://gov.louisiana.gov/index.cfm?md=newsroom&tmp=detail&articleID=778>.

Governor was waiting on the federal [government]. None of them were on the same page at all.

Another junior legislator agreed stating, “Local and state could not get on the same page, which caused a lot of problems.” According to a senior state senator, “The legislature responds to a strong executive. We wait for the Governor to establish an agenda and then we respond. Given the urgency to respond to Katrina, the legislature followed along.” In the assessment of how Governor Blanco handled the situation, the same senior state senator stated:

I think the Governor was caught up in national politics. I think the Governor’s staff, the Governor always surrounded herself with a small staff that didn’t have long tentacles. When Katrina hit that showed. There was no way to devise effective strategy and employ it at the scale needed.

While a number of African-American House members believed that political direction should have been provided by Governor Blanco, the majority responded that African-American legislators and the LLBC should have done more to help the evacuation efforts. However, many responded that a major problem was that a significant number of LLBC members were themselves affected by the storm and had to evacuate, which resulted in them being absent in the early stages of the evacuation efforts. A junior legislator from New Orleans stated, “We [African-American legislators] didn’t do the best job either. We could have worked closer with [Mayor] Nagin, especially the New Orleans legislators. But many of us were taking care of our families.” A senior legislator shared their disappointment with all levels of government, but emphasized, “I blame the LLBC, because we didn’t do more. The whole situation disgusts me.”

## National Government

President Bush declared a state of emergency for Louisiana on Saturday, August 27. National Hurricane Center director Max Mayfield held a video conference with President Bush at his ranch in Crawford, Texas, to explain the potential damage the hurricane could cause.<sup>38</sup> Abreast of the potential impact of Hurricane Katrina, many of the African-American House members interviewed were appalled at the federal government's slow response, especially that of President Bush, to the evacuation efforts. A junior legislator explained, "This is the same bird that was reading after 9/11, he couldn't get his stuff together, with all of the assets. We had people in water and on roofs for days. That is sheer inhuman." Another junior legislator said, "I was disappointed in the federal government for not being 'Johnny on the spot'. The President's actions after Katrina were sub-par. FEMA didn't do an adequate job. Across the board, all federal agencies failed." A senior legislator believed, "The federal government dropped the ball 100%. There was too much bureaucracy. They should have exempted a lot of the red tape. Homeland Security did a terrible job." According to a junior legislator from New Orleans that greatly expressed his dissatisfaction with the Bush Administration:

From a national standpoint, it was an international embarrassment, for people to go without food and water. It was an embarrassment. How did the people in Washington go to sleep at night? They didn't drop water and food in a timely manner. This President is an international idiot and joke. I can't wait for the day he gets out of office. Anybody could have done a better job. Empty promises... to allow your citizens, the people that you are sworn to take care of to go without water and food is an embarrassment.

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<sup>38</sup> Tamara Lush, "For Forecasting Chief, No Joy in Being Right," *St. Petersburg Times*, August 30, 2005, A.2.

## **Did Race Play A Role In the Slow Response?**

In a press conference following Hurricane Katrina, a reporter asked President Bush whether he believed race played a role in the slow recovery efforts. He responded, “My attitude is that, the storm didn’t discriminate and neither will the recovery effort...when the Coast Guard choppers were pulling people off roofs, they didn’t check the color of a person’s skin. They wanted to save lives.”<sup>39</sup>

African-American House members responded the opposite when asked whether they believe that race played a role in the slow response of evacuation efforts. An overwhelming majority responded with an unequivocal “yes”. A junior legislator responded to whether race was a factor by stating:

If you are asking me if a group or community, wealthy white Republicans, and that group was devastated, would George Bush have been slow to respond? Of course it was. What you were dealing with was a group of poor black Democrats. If it had been in Florida in a wealthy white area, the response would have been different. If white folks were on those roofs, it would have been a world of difference.

Another junior legislator explained, “I believe that race played a role. Looking at the TV all you saw were black people. It was like the Truman show. Reality TV played out in front of the world and they saw first hand the problems of New Orleans.” A senior legislator also agreed stating, “It was a show of how a nation that is supposed to be the world’s elite, we help all these countries, but can’t help people in New Orleans that were victims of Hurricane Katrina. I don’t get it. Maybe it was because they were black. I just don’t get it.”

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<sup>39</sup> Susan Page and Mario Puente, “Poll Shows Racial Divide on Storm Response,” *USA TODAY*, September 13, 2005, pg. A2.

Another line of thinking was expressed by a junior legislator who believed that partisanship played a role in the slow response. She explained:

The breakdown in communication was horrible. Had the Governor been a male or even Republican you think that the response would have been different, because when you look at Mississippi, one of the reasons that they received expedited assistance was because the Governor was male and Republican.

The lack of support from President Bush in the immediate days following the hurricane is in stark contradiction to his responses to Hurricanes Charley and Frances hitting the state of Florida in 2004. Even though the damages were not comparable to the destruction of Hurricane Katrina, President Bush frequently visited hurricane affected areas, made contact with the victims, and in some cases, personally delivered relief checks.<sup>40</sup> A senior legislator provided another perspective by stating, “I’m not sure. I think that a lack of concern played a part. [Mayor] Nagin and [Governor] Blanco reacted slow, so [President] Bush reacted slow. If the people who are affected don’t show great concern, why should someone else.”

### **African-American Legislator’s Efforts After Hurricane Katrina**

When asked what black legislators were doing to help constituents affected by Hurricane Katrina, many of them reiterated that helping displaced residents return to Louisiana was their main focus. As stated by a north Louisiana junior legislator, “The representatives from New Orleans, that’s all their main focus was, the Road Home.” To add to this question, legislators were further asked what the status of the Road Home Program is and if Louisiana residents were being accommodated. Many of the legislators

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<sup>40</sup> Jacob Weisberg, “An Imperfect Storm: How Race Shaped Bush’s Response to Katrina,” *Slate*, September 7, 2005, <http://www.slate.com/id/2125812/?nav=navoa>.

identified the obstacles the state legislature has faced and the shortage of available funding to eligible applicants. A junior legislator from New Orleans responded:

We had a big fight with the Road Home. I think Road Home is one of the big things talked about here in the city. We got word from the federal government that if we put \$750,000,000 aside, they would match that to supply the Road Home. The LLBC took a lead role on that. That was one of the issues that we met about prior to [the] session [2006 regular session] because many people can't come back without Road Home.

Another junior legislator from New Orleans added:

It's worse than the storm, and a spit in the face of the people trying to get their lives back in order. To continue to fund the war in Iraq and Afghanistan at how many billion dollars a month and not take care of your own people, Americans, tax payers. It is a spit in the face of people.

When asked whether black legislators have been successful in these efforts, one junior legislator stated, "I think that black legislators are doing all they can." The legislator further explained, "I think that we have been successful. But, that is open to opinion. People have criticized our actions. Some do not know how difficult it is to go to the legislature with an agenda and then try to pass the legislation on that agenda." A senior state senator added:

The voting stuff really speaks to all the Katrina stuff. Katrina was the big spot light, it put all of the issues on the front page. For the larger legislature they wanted to respond to the immediate Katrina problems and not address the systemic issues which got us here. I think the VRA legislation was a great example of that. The legislature was willing to address a number of short term efforts and not look beyond that.

## **Voting Rights Legislation in the Post-Hurricane Katrina Period**

This section analyzes the legislative productivity of African-American House members in the post-Hurricane Katrina legislative sessions, specifically, the bill introduction, co-sponsorship, roll-call votes and passage of legislation crafted to facilitate access to the ballot for displaced residents, especially African-Americans.<sup>41</sup>

### **Bill Introduction**

A descriptive analysis found that in the post-Hurricane Katrina legislative sessions 22 voting rights bills were introduced related to facilitating access to the ballot for displaced residents. All 22 bills were introduced by African-American legislators from New Orleans (see Appendix A.3). Six bills were introduced in the 2005 1<sup>st</sup> extraordinary session, nine in the 2006 1<sup>st</sup> extraordinary session, and seven in the 2006 regular session. New Orleans Rep. Jamila Jefferson-Bullock introduced 11 of these bills; four in the 2005 extraordinary session, three in the 2006 extraordinary session, and four in the 2006 regular session. She accounted for 50 percent of the bills introduced by African-Americans. Cedric Richmond and Juan LaFonta each introduced four bills, Charmaine Marchand two bills, and Cheryl Gray one. Cedric Richmond was the chair of the LLBC. All five of those introducing voting rights bills were serving in their first term.

No white legislator introduced a bill related explicitly to facilitating access to the ballot for displaced residents. They did, however, introduce bills and resolutions related to other election issues: for example, shortening the hours the polls are required to be open on Election Day, making changes to the election code for citizens of the Louisiana residing abroad, and providing authorization to the Secretary of State to develop and

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<sup>41</sup> The only Latino in the 2007 Louisiana House has been eliminated from the analysis.

implement a pilot program to assess early voting at additional locations within certain parishes.

Many of the voting rights bills introduced by African-Americans in the 2005 and 2006 extraordinary sessions died in the House and Governmental Affairs committee. One bill passed and two failed final House passage.<sup>42</sup> Bills introduced by African-American legislators did receive opposition from Republicans. In the 2006 extraordinary session, African-American House members staged a walk-out when the chamber killed HB 14 that would have authorized registered voters of the affected areas to vote in polling stations around Louisiana during the early voting period to facilitate a higher turnout of black voters in the April 22, 2006 New Orleans municipal elections. After the walkout, Governor Blanco agreed to meet with the LLBC to address the issue of voting rights.<sup>43</sup> As a senior state senator explained, “I don’t think she went into the session with the voting rights as one of her top five agenda [items]. She later was supportive after that.”

The resistance to bills introduced by African-Americans did not discourage their efforts. According to a junior legislator:

New Orleans representatives introduced the most legislation related to voting rights. I believe that we did the best we could do for the voters. And I’m saying that based on the resistance from white legislators. Sometimes we had to introduce the same bill over and over.

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<sup>42</sup> In the 2006 extraordinary session HB 12 passed (see Appendix A.3, item #7). In the 2005 extraordinary session HB 59 failed House final passage and in the 2006 extraordinary session HB 14 failed House final passage (see Appendix A.3, items # 3 and 9).

<sup>43</sup> Robert Scott, “Black Caucus Presses Agenda,” *Times-Picayune* (New Orleans), March 31, 2006, pg. A3.



This was apparent in the 2005 and 2006 extraordinary sessions as African-Americans introduced bills that were essentially the same. For example, in the 2005 extraordinary session Rep. Richmond introduced HB 100 that would allow registered voters temporarily displaced who had registered by mail to vote absentee without first voting in person at the polls or appearing or voting at the register's office. The bill died in committee. In the 2006 extraordinary session, Rep. Jefferson-Bullock introduced essentially the same bill HB 12, that passed in the legislature.

Only five freshmen African-American legislators from New Orleans introduced voting rights bills related to facilitating access to the ballot for displaced voters. This results in the absence of confirmation for hypotheses 1 through 3, concerning bill introduction. Table 5.1 shows the estimated coefficients for the negative binomial regression models concerning these hypotheses. The table is divided into the four models specified in chapter 3, one for each of the hypotheses concerning this activity.

**TABLE 5.1**  
**Negative Binomial Regression of Bill Introduction in the Louisiana House**  
**Post-Hurricane Katrina Legislative Sessions**

Dependent Variable: Bill Introduction				
Independent Variables	<i>Model One</i> All Legislators	<i>Model Two</i> White Only	<i>Model Three</i> African-American Only	<i>Model Four</i> African-American Only
Race	19.11 (1602.44)	—	—	—
Party	—	—	—	—
Leader	—	—	-2.39 (1.23)	—
Senior	—	—	—	-.38 (.23)
Constant	-19.15	—	.60	2.03
N	104	—	23	23
Pseudo R2	.25	—	.06	.08
Prob > chi2	.00	—	.08	.05
*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001				

In Model 1, which tests hypothesis number 1 that African-Americans are more likely than white legislators to introduce bills supportive of voting rights, the relationship is in the predicted direction but not statistically significant. Despite the fact that *only* African-American legislators introduced voting rights bills, the relationship is too weak to be statistically significant given the number of cases because the vast majority of African-American legislators did not introduce such a bill. Hypothesis number 2 holds that white Democrats are more likely than Republicans to introduce bills supportive of voting rights. This hypothesis must be rejected as no white legislator, regardless of party

identification, introduced such a bill. As King, Keohane, and Verba point out (1994, 129), when there is no variation on the dependent variable it is impossible to explain anything about the cause and effect of the variable without descriptive narrative. As stated above, white legislators introduced bills related to election issues, but not related explicitly to facilitating access to the ballot for displaced residents.

Hypothesis number 3 held that African-Americans that hold leadership positions are more likely than African-Americans that do not hold such positions to introduce bills supportive of voting rights. The relationship, tested in Model 3, is in the opposite direction and not statistically significant. Despite the fact that only African-Americans without leadership positions introduced such bills, most of the African-Americans in that situation did not. Others holding leadership positions did not introduce such bills, and therefore the relationship overall is weak. The test of hypothesis number 4, that senior African-Americans are more likely than junior African-Americans to introduce bills supportive of voting rights, also was not in the predicted direction and not statistically significant. The variable *seniority* (SEN), however, was on the margins of significance at ( $\alpha=.10$ ).<sup>44</sup> As the descriptive analysis explained, only freshman African-American legislators introduced bills supportive of voting rights, but again many other freshmen did not.

### **Co-Sponsorship**

In the post-Hurricane Katrina legislative sessions only two of the 22 voting rights bills introduced were co-sponsored. Rep. Jefferson-Bullock authored these two bills

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<sup>44</sup> The study also attempted to perform a similar analysis for Models 3 and 4 for white legislators only. Again, because there was no variation on the dependent variable for white legislators these models were not generated.

which were HB 12 introduced in the 2006 extraordinary session and HB 641 introduced in the 2006 regular session.<sup>45</sup> No white legislators co-sponsored either of these bills. HB 12 received five African-American co-sponsors, four African-American House members (Reps. Marchand, Richmond, Gray, and Hunter, Jr.) and one African-American senator (Sen. Jones). HB 641 received two African-American co-sponsors, both House members (Reps. Carter and Gray).

Although only African-American legislators co-sponsored voting rights bills, hypothesis number 5, that African-Americans are more likely than white legislators to co-sponsor bills supportive of voting rights, cannot be confirmed. Model 1 in Table 5.2 tests this hypothesis. As with sponsorship, the relationship is in the predicted direction but too few of the African-American legislators co-sponsored these bills to result in a relationship of sufficient magnitude to be statistically significant. Hypothesis number 6, tested in Model 2, held that white Democrats are more likely than Republicans to co-sponsor bills supportive of voting rights. Again, no white legislator, regardless of party identification, co-sponsored any voting rights legislation.

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<sup>45</sup> HB 12 would allow registered voters temporarily displaced who have registered by mail to vote absentee by mail without first voting in person at the polls or appearing or voting at the register's office. [SIGNED BY THE GOVERNOR.]

HB 641 would authorize the registered voters of the affected area to vote during the early voting period at certain temporary satellite voting locations. [BILL DIED IN COMMITTEE.]

**TABLE 5.2**  
**Negative Binomial Regression of Bill Co-Sponsorship in the Louisiana House**  
**Post-Hurricane Katrina Legislative Sessions**

Dependent Variable: Co-Sponsorship		
Independent Variables	<i>Model One</i> All Legislators	<i>Model Two</i> White Only
Race	18.63 (2409.96)	—
Party	—	—
Constant	-19.97	—
N	104	—
Pseudo R2	.35	—
Prob > chi2	.00	—
*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001		

### Roll-Call Votes

In the post-Hurricane Katrina legislative sessions there were only 11 recorded roll-call votes on the 22 voting rights bills. Sixteen of the bills introduced died in the House and Governmental Affairs committee. There were 11 roll-call votes on the remaining six bills (see Appendix A.4). These votes were on House amendments, final passage in the House, and concurrence with Senate amendments.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>46</sup> The amendment process is an important stage in legislative proceedings. During this stage the House decides on amendments to the legislation it considers. A House amendment concerns the modification of a bill or resolution by adding or deleting language or changing wording. A concurrence in a Senate amendment is the action of the Louisiana House to agree to amendments to the bill adopted by the state Senate (<http://house.louisiana.gov/>, 2007).

Roll-call voting analyses usually examine only votes in which at least 10 percent of the voting members disagree with the majority (see Appendix A.4). Anderson, Watts, and Wilcox (1966, 79-80) indicate that the degree of contesting roll-call votes is a useful criterion for selection because in many legislatures the number of unanimous roll-call votes is often large. Unanimous or close to unanimous votes indicate little about the conflicts and cleavages present in the legislature. Contested roll-calls are necessary to reveal such patterns in the voting behavior of legislators.

The six contested roll-call votes were analyzed by examining divisions in the vote by the race of the representatives, party of the white representatives, and the black voting age populations (BVAP) in the white Democrats' districts. Tables 5.3 through 5.7 display the results of these analyses. Table 5.3 compares the roll-call votes for African-American and white legislators on these measures. Hypothesis number 7 holds that African-Americans are more supportive of voting rights than white legislators in their roll-call votes on measures to facilitate voting. The table shows that African-Americans were unanimous in their support of all voting rights bills except for an amendment to HB 14 in the 2006 extraordinary session where only one African-American legislator was not supportive. This bill authorized registered voters of the affected areas to vote in polling stations around Louisiana during the early voting period. Present law requires that the early voting period be from 12 to six days prior to any scheduled election. Republican Kay Katz proposed an amendment to the bill that would limit this early period to only six days. White legislators were significantly less supportive of this amendment as 72 percent voted against it. Support from white legislators on voting rights bills was split. However, they strongly opposed HB 59 and HB 14, resulting in both failing on the House

floor.<sup>47</sup> Seventy percent of white legislators opposed the passage of HB 59 and 68 percent for HB 14.

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<sup>47</sup> HB 59 would allow temporarily displaced persons who have registered to vote by mail to vote absentee but to require certain documentation showing their displaced status.

**TABLE 5.3**  
**Roll-Call Votes of African-Americans and White Legislators in the Louisiana House**  
**Post-Hurricane Katrina Legislative Sessions**

	African-Americans				White Legislators			
	Support N	%	Non-Support N	%	Support N	%	Non-Support N	%
<b>2005 1<sup>st</sup> Extraordinary Session</b>								
<b>HB 59</b>								
1. House Amendment N= 23 African-Americans N= 75 Whites Total Voting Members	23	100	0	0	45	60	29	40
2. House Final Passage N= 21 African-Americans N= 77 Whites Total Voting Members	21	100	0	0	23	30	53	70
<b>2006 1<sup>st</sup> Extraordinary Session</b>								
<b>HB 12</b>								
3. Concur in Senate Amendment N= 21 African-Americans N= 78 Whites Total Voting Members	21	100	0	0	45	58	32	42
4. House Final Passage N= 23 African-Americans N= 77 Whites Total Voting Members	23	100	0	0	48	62	29	38
<b>2006 1<sup>st</sup> Extraordinary Session</b>								
<b>HB 14</b>								
5. House Amendment N= 19 African-Americans N= 75 Whites Total Voting Members	18	95	1	5	21	28	53	72
6. House Final Passage N= 22 African-Americans N= 78 Whites Total Voting Members	22	100	0	0	24	32	53	68

Source: <http://www.legis.state.la.us/>, 2007. Note: The roll-calls for the amendment to HB 14 have been reversed in scoring to identify legislators that were in support for better access to the ballot for displaced voters. Legislators that cast “nays” were in favor of expanding access to the ballot (i.e., Support) and those that cast “yeas” were not (i.e., Non-Support).



The partisan divide among white legislators is explored in Table 5.4. This table reveals the roll-call votes for white Democrats and Republicans on measures to facilitate voting. Hypothesis number 8 holds that white Democrats are more supportive of voting rights than Republicans in their roll-call votes. The results confirm that white Democrats were more supportive than Republicans. A majority of Democrats disagreed with a majority of Republicans on each vote. Opposition to these measures among white Democrats ranged from six percent to 34 percent. Republican support ranged from zero to 19 percent. Republicans unanimously voted down HB 59 and HB 14, which led to their defeat on the House floor. Also, they unanimously voted for the amendment to HB 14.

**TABLE 5.4**  
**Roll-Call Votes of White Legislators in the Louisiana House**  
**Post-Hurricane Katrina Legislative Sessions**

	Whites Democrats				Republicans			
	Support		Non-Support		Support		Non-Support	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>2005 1<sup>st</sup> Extraordinary Session</b>								
<b>HB 59</b>								
1. House Amendment N= 35 White Democrats N= 39 Republicans Total Voting Members	30	86	5	14	15	38	24	62
2. House Final Passage N= 35 White Democrats N= 41 Republicans Total Voting Members	23	66	12	34	0	0	41	100
<b>2006 1<sup>st</sup> Extraordinary Session</b>								
<b>HB 12</b>								
3. Concur in Senate Amendment N= 36 White Democrats N= 41 Republicans Total Voting Members	34	94	2	6	11	27	30	73
4. House Final Passage N= 32 White Democrats N= 44 Republicans Total Voting Members	29	91	3	9	18	41	26	59
<b>2006 1<sup>st</sup> Extraordinary Session</b>								
<b>HB 14</b>								
5. House Amendment N= 30 White Democrats N= 44 Republicans Total Voting Members	21	70	9	30	0	0	44	100
6. House Final Passage N= 34 White Democrats N= 43 Republicans Total Voting Members	24	71	10	29	0	0	43	100

Source: <http://www.legis.state.la.us/>, 2007. Note: The roll-calls for the amendment to HB 14 have been reversed in scoring to identify legislators that were in support for better access to the ballot for displaced voters. Legislators that cast “nays” were in favor of expanding access to the ballot (i.e., Support) and those that cast “yeas” were not (i.e., Non-Support).

Table 5.5 reveals the roll-call votes of white Democrats based on the BVAP in their districts. Hypothesis number 9 holds that white Democrats support for voting rights is positively related to the size of the BVAP in their districts. The table shows that the relationship between BVAP and roll-call voting patterns is positive. White Democrats tended to be more responsive as the percentage of black voters in their district increased. Those that had a BVAP above 50 percent unanimously voted in favor of better access to the ballot for displaced voters. The table shows that three white Democrats cast a total of 17 votes, 16 in favor of greater access to the ballot, 94 percent, and only 1 against, 6 percent. The one vote that was not supportive occurred on the hostile amendment to HB 14. Only one absention was reported in this range. In the 30 to 39.9 percent range, again white Democrats were responsive to facilitating access to the ballot on all measures. Ten white Democrats cast a total of 52 votes, 41 in favor of greater access to the ballot, 79 percent, and 11 against, 21 percent. Four of the non-supportive votes were cast in opposition to final passage of HB 14, three against final passage of HB 59, three in favor of the hostile amendment to HB 14, and one against an amendment to HB 59. Eight absentions were reported in this range.

**TABLE 5.5**  
**Roll-Call Votes of White Democrats and BVAP in the Louisiana House**  
**Post-Hurricane Katrina Legislative Sessions**

District #	% Black VAP	HB59 House Amendment	HB 59 House Final Passage	HB 12 Senate Amendments	HB 12 House Final Passage	HB 14 House Amendment	HB 14 House Final Passage
102	61.7	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
95	54.5	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
21	52.9	Y	Y	Y	ABSENT	Y	Y
18	39.5	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
57	37.8	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
23	34.6	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	ABSENT
92	34.3	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N
60	33	Y	Y	Y	Y	ABSENT	Y
83	32.8	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
19	32.1	N	N	Y	Y	ABSENT	ABSENT
50	31.4	Y	Y	Y	ABSENT	Y	Y
46	31.4	Y	ABSENT	Y	Y	Y	N
10	30	ABSENT	N	Y	ABSENT	N	N
48	29.9	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
75	29.5	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
14	28.2	N	N	Y	N	N	N
28	27.9	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
56	27.7	Y	Y	Y	Y	ABSENT	Y
7	27.3	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
13	25.2	N	N	Y	N	N	N
38	25.1	Y	Y	Y	ABSENT	Y	Y
20	24.8	N	N	N	Y	N	Y
30	23.7	Y	Y	ABSENT	Y	ABSENT	N
51	23.2	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
39	21	Y	ABSENT	Y	Y	Y	Y
49	20.6	Y	Y	Y	Y	ABSENT	Y
41	19.7	Y	Y	ABSENT	ABSENT	Y	Y
42	19.4	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	ABSENT
103	18.4	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
25	17.7	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
55	17.1	ABSENT	N	N	Y	ABSENT	N
24	17	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
32	16.7	Y	ABSENT	Y	N	N	N
22	15.2	Y	Y	Y	Y	ABSENT	Y
53	14	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
84	13	Y	N	Y	ABSENT	N	N
47	12.7	ABSENT	Y	Y	Y	Y	ABSENT
27	8.6	Y	N	Y	N	ABSENT	N

Sources: <http://www.legis.state.la.us/>, 2007; The BVAP data were obtained from the Office of Reapportionment of the Committee on House and Governmental Affairs. These data capture the BVAP as reported in the 2000 U.S. Census. Note: The roll-calls for the amendment to HB 14 have been reversed in scoring to identify legislators that were in support for better access to the ballot for displaced voters. Legislators that cast “nays” were in favor of expanding access to the ballot (i.e., Support) and those that cast “yeas” were not (i.e., Non-Support).

In the 20 to 29.9 percent range, support dropped slightly. Thirteen white Democrats cast a total of 72 votes, 54 in favor of greater access to the ballot, 75 percent, and 18 against, 25 percent. Two of the white Democrats with districts within this range voted against five of the six measures. Reps. James R. Fannin (D-13) and Charles McDonald (D-14), representing districts that contained BVAP percentages of 25.2 and 28.2 respectively, consistently voted against measures to enhance access to the ballot. Five of the non-supportive votes were in support of the hostile amendment to HB 14, four against final passage of HB 59, three against an amendment to HB 59, three against final passage of HB 14, two against final passage of HB 12 and one against an amendment to HB 12. Six absentions were reported in this range. The white Democrats in districts below 20 percent BVAP were more supportive of voting rights bills than those in the 20 percent range, and equal in support to those in the 40 percent range. Twelve white Democrats in this range cast a total of 61 votes, 48 in favor of greater access to the ballot, 79 percent, and 13 against, 21 percent. Four of the dissenting votes were in opposition to final passage of HB 59 and HB 14, two against final passage of HB 12, two in favor of the hostile amendment to HB 14, and one against an amendment to HB 12. Eleven absentions were reported in this range.

Despite having a sizable BVAP, 22 white Democrats still voted against HB 59 and HB 14. Three with districts in the 30 percent range, four in the 20 percent range, and four below 20 percent voted against HB 59. Likewise for HB 14, as four with districts in

the 30 percent range, three in the 20 percent range, and four below 20 percent voted against HB 14. Both bills failed on the House floor.<sup>48</sup>

Table 5.6 juxtaposes the roll-call votes of Republicans to the BVAP in their districts. While no hypothesis holding that BVAP would relate to support for these measures among Republican legislators was offered, the table provides a comparison to the findings in Table 5.5. As previously stated, Republicans were unanimously opposed to three of the six roll-call votes. This table examines the vote distribution of the three remaining measures. The two most African-American districts both had a BVAP percentage of 31. Both of the representatives for these districts cast four of their six votes against facilitating access to the ballot. These representatives cast a total of six votes, two in favor of greater access to the ballot, 33 percent, and four against, 67 percent. Two of the non-supportive votes were against an amendment to HB 59, one against an amendment to HB 12, and one in opposition to final passage of HB 12.

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<sup>48</sup> In 2007 term limited white Democrats, Alex Heaton (District 95) and Glenn Asardi (District 92), switched to the Republican party after the legislative session.

**TABLE 5.6**  
**Roll-Call Votes of Republicans and BVAP in the Louisiana House**  
**Post-Hurricane Katrina Legislative Sessions**

District #	% Black VAP	HB59 House Amendment	HB 12 Senate Amendments	HB 12 House Final Passage
86	31	N	Y	N
62	31	N	N	Y
85	29	Y	N	Y
1	23	N	Y	N
9	20.5	Y	Y	Y
68	20.3	N	Y	N
12	20	ABSENT	N	Y
66	19.4	N	N	N
73	18.1	N	N	Y
70	17.3	Y	N	Y
105	16	Y	Y	Y
16	15.3	N	N	N
37	15.1	N	N	N
8	15	N	N	N
5	14	N	N	N
52	13.4	N	N	N
64	13	N	N	Y
94	11.5	N	N	Y
6	11.5	Y	N	N
76	11.4	N	N	Y
90	11.2	N	N	N
35	11.1	Y	N	N
82	11	Y	N	N
74	10.1	N	N	Y
59	9.6	N	N	N
43	9.3	N	N	N
65	9.2	N	N	N
4	9.1	Y	ABSENT	N
15	9	N	N	N
80	8	Y	Y	Y
89	7.7	Y	ABSENT	N
69	7.6	ABSENT	N	Y
104	7.6	N	Y	Y
33	7.6	Y	N	N
77	7.6	Y	Y	Y
31	7	N	N	N
36	6.7	ABSENT	N	N
79	6.7	Y	Y	Y
11	6.3	ABSENT	N	N
54	5.3	Y	Y	Y
71	4.8	N	N	N
78	4.8	Y	Y	Y
88	4.1	N	N	N
81	2.7	ABSENT	ABSENT	N

Sources: <http://www.legis.state.la.us/>, 2007.

Republicans serving districts with BVAP in the 20 to 29.9 percent range were more responsive to voting rights concerns. The five Republicans in this category cast a total of 14 votes, eight in favor of support for access to the ballot, 57 percent, and six against, 43 percent. Republicans in districts in the 10 to 19.9 percent range were least supportive of measures extending access to the ballot. The seventeen Republicans in this category cast a total of 51 votes, only 13 in favor of support for access to the ballot, 25 percent, and 38 against, 75 percent. Republicans in districts below 10 percent BVAP were more supportive of voting rights than those in the 10 to 19.9 percent range, but not as supportive as those in the 20 to 29.9 percent range. The twenty Republicans in this category cast a total of 53 votes, 21 in favor of access to the ballot, 40 percent, and 32 against, 60 percent. Republicans were not more supportive to voting rights concerns as the BVAP in their districts increased.

The estimated coefficients for the regression models concerning roll-call votes are reported in Table 5.7. In Model 1, which tests hypothesis number 7 that African-Americans are more supportive of voting rights than white legislators in their roll-call votes, the relationship is in the predicted direction and statistically significant. As stated above, African-Americans were unanimous in their support of voting rights bills except for an amendment to HB 14 in the 2006 extraordinary session. White legislators were significantly less supportive on half of the measures, especially on final passage of HB 59 and HB 14, both of which failed on the House floor. This resulted in an African-American legislator being 19 percent more likely to support a voting rights bill than a white legislator.



**TABLE 5.7**  
**OLS Regression of Roll-Call Votes in the Louisiana House**  
**Post-Hurricane Katrina Legislative Sessions**

Dependent Variable: Roll-Call				
Independent Variables	<i>Model One</i> All Legislators	<i>Model Two</i> White Only	<i>Model Three</i> White Democrats Only	<i>Model Four</i> White Democrats Only
Race	.19*** (.04)	—	—	—
Party	—	.18*** (.03)	—	—
BVAP	—	—	.43** (.16)	.32 (.11)
Constant	.67***	.58***	.58***	.49*
N	104	80	38	35
R <sup>2</sup>	0.21	0.27	0.09	0.03
Prob > F	0.0000	0.0000	0.0076	0.0001
*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001				

Model 2 tests hypothesis number 8, that white Democrats are more supportive of voting rights than Republicans. Again the relationship is in the predicted direction and statistically significant. In these legislative sessions, the majority of white Democrats and the majority of Republicans disagreed on each vote, with white Democrats voting in support of facilitating access to the ballot and Republicans opposing it. A white Democrat was 18 percent more likely to support a voting rights bill than a Republican.

Model 3 tests hypothesis number 9, that white Democrats' support for voting rights is positively related to the size of the BVAP in their districts. The relationship is in

the predicted direction and also statistically significant.<sup>49</sup> For every percentage increase in BVAP, support for the voting rights bills by white Democrats tends to increase by 0.43 percent. As noted above, however, the most supportive group was white Democrats representing majority African-American districts. In order to determine the relationship for white Democrats in districts with white majorities, these three representatives were dropped and the analysis replicated. Model 4 shows that the relationship is still in the predicted direction, but now weaker (.32) and no longer statistically significant. It can not be concluded, therefore, that increases in BVAP reliably relate to increases in the support levels for voting rights bills among white Democrats representing majority white districts.

### **Bill Passage**

The study proposed two hypotheses concerning bill passage. The study was interested in determining the relative rate of voting rights bills introduced by African-American and white legislators that passed in the Louisiana House. Hypothesis number 13, which holds that African-Americans are less likely than white legislators to achieve passage of their bills supportive of voting rights, cannot be tested however, as no white legislators introduced such a bill. There are, in short, no data to make this comparison. All of the voting rights bills were introduced by African-Americans and four of them, 18 percent, passed. These were:

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<sup>49</sup> This study also graphed the BVAP variable to explore whether there was a curvilinear relationship. No such relationship was revealed.

(1) HB 12 authored by Jalila Jefferson-Bullock, introduced in the 2006 extraordinary session, that would allow registered voters temporarily displaced who have registered by mail to vote absentee without first voting in person at the polls or appearing or voting at the register's office.

(2) HB 587 also authored by Jalila Jefferson-Bullock, introduced in the 2006 regular session, which would allow a person involuntarily displaced from his place of residence by the effects of a gubernatorially declared state of emergency to be considered a resident of the state and parish in which he is registered to vote unless he has either established a new domicile or has changed his registration to an address outside the voting district.

(3) HB 1390 authored by Cheryl Gray, introduced in the 2006 regular session, that authorizes the secretary of state to include the conduct of early voting in certain parishes as part of an emergency plan to conduct elections impaired by a gubernatorially declared disaster or emergency.

(4) HB 193 authored by Juan LaFonta, introduced in the 2006 regular session, that provides for the reinstatement of prior voter registration information for a voter who re-registers to vote in a parish in which he was previously registered, provided that he re-

registers within three years of cancellation of this registration in that parish.<sup>50</sup>

Hypothesis number 14 holds that African-Americans that hold leadership positions are more likely than African-Americans that do not to achieve passage of their bills supportive of voting rights. This hypothesis is not supported. As noted above, only non-leaders introduced voting rights bills, of which four passed for a rate of 18 percent. A negative binomial equation was also performed on hypothesis number 14. The coefficient for LEADER, -19.01, was statistically insignificant, which reflects the fact that most African-American legislators did not introduce a bill.

### **African-American Leadership**

The fact that no African-American holding a leadership position within the legislature introduced a voting rights bill does not mean that leadership positions do not play a significant role in the legislative process. African-American House members that held leadership positions in 2007 are identified in Table 5.8.

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<sup>50</sup> Each of these four bills became law.

**Table 5.8**  
**African-American Leadership Positions in the Louisiana House, 2007**

Legislator(s)	Leadership Positions/Committee Assignments
<i>Speaker Pro Tempore</i>	
Yvonne Dorsey	Ex-officio member of all standing committees
<i>Committee Chairpersons:</i>	
Ernest Baylor Jr.	Municipal, Parochial & Cultural Affairs
Karen R. Carter	Insurance
Willie Hunter Jr.	Labor and Industrial Relations
Wilfred Pierre	Natural Resources
<i>Committee Vice Chairpersons:</i>	
Israel B. Curtis	Retirement
Richard Gallot Jr.	House and Governmental Affairs
Avon Honey	Education
Michael Jackson	Health and Welfare

Source: <http://house.louisiana.gov>, 2007.

To further understand the importance of leadership positions, African-American legislators were asked whether they believed it was important to hold leadership positions in order to have an influence on the legislative agenda and the passing of legislation. As expected, all African-American legislators that were interviewed responded it was important. Several legislators provided analogies to explain the importance of leadership positions. Using a sports analogy, a senior legislator explained:

Yes, you have to be in the game before you can make a decision. It's an active role in winning. With the position we are in now, as far as African-Americans are concerned, a lot of the things that we have to accomplish need to be accomplished from internal and not external. Being in a leadership position is part of that."

Another senior legislator used a car analogy, stating:

Yes. Let me use this analogy. It's like riding in a car. Unless you are driving the car, you can't dictate where the car is going. You can give

directions, but you don't control where the car is going. At any time, the bill can die in committee. But if you are a chairman or vice-chairman you can help drive the car to the destination.

A junior legislator provided this perspective in reference to holding a leadership position:

You are in different circles, and you build relationship you would not have if not in those leadership roles. Those leaders attend different meetings, so it allows you to be in different circles. We have to be at the table. One of the things that Governor Blanco has done is make sure she has put more African-Americans in leadership positions.

### **African-American Legislators: Introduction and Passage**

African-American legislators were asked whether they believed they were successful in their efforts to introduce and pass legislation dealing with voting rights in the post-Hurricane Katrina legislative sessions. As a senior legislator stated, "We were successful in introducing legislation, but not in passing legislation. We passed a couple of bills." A junior legislator explained, "I think that we were successful in bringing it to the attention of the legislature, but not that successful in getting significant legislation passed. We tried very hard to make sure all people could vote." African-American legislators agreed that there was resistance from Republicans in the Louisiana House. As a junior legislator explained, "We got a couple passed but not as many as we would have hoped. Republicans were against some of the bills."

### **Did Race Play a Role in the Defeat of Legislation?**

When asked whether they believed race played a role in the defeat of voting rights legislation, the majority of African-American House members responded "yes". As discussed by a junior legislator:

Race did play a role, although I have only been in the legislature a short time, I still see the effects of some of those earlier votes, specifically those

related to voting rights. White legislators thought New Orleans needed a change. This was an opportunity to have only those most relevant, or whom they thought most relevant, vote in the election.

Another junior legislator stated:

I think part of it is there is such a sense of arrogance that many white legislators saw an opportunity to put in check blacks from the New Orleans's area. Many of our white colleagues saw an opportunity to correct an area they felt formed a political block that helped to create a certain power base that they resented.

Another junior legislator offered this statement:

I was disenchanted with my fellow white colleagues that they would consider giving Iraqis a right to vote...for office overseas, and they would accommodate them, but they would not set up voting machines for our own people who were displaced and I think race played a part in that.

African-American House members also made reference to the statements made by Mayor Ray Nagin during a Black History Month Celebration in February, 2006, when he described New Orleans as a "chocolate" city.<sup>51</sup> As one junior legislator explained, "Race did play a role. Especially, if you consider the statements made by Mayor Nagin about New Orleans being a chocolate city. His statements were not received well. So, many [white legislators] wanted to vote against that."

Several legislators responded that race and partisanship played a dual role in the defeat of voting rights legislation. As one junior legislator believed, "Race and partisanship [played a role]. I think their goal is to make the state turn red [i.e., Republican]. They are trying to get people of the other party to represent this state." A senior legislator stated, "You have to keep in mind that if black voters did not vote, New

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<sup>51</sup> Adam Nossiter, "New Orleans Facing Election and New Order," *The New York Times*, February 3, 2006, p.2.

Orleans potentially could have elected a white mayor [Lt. Governor Mitch Landrieu]. New Orleans has not had a white mayor in a long time. Not since his father [Moon Landrieu]. The Landrieu family says they're Democrats, but we know better."<sup>52</sup>

### **Political Incorporation in the Louisiana House of Representatives**

This section focuses on the political incorporation among African-American House members. The organizational structure of the Louisiana House is examined to identify institutional leadership patterns and also the committees that are important to African-Americans.

#### **Louisiana House Structure**

In the 2007 Louisiana House, Joe R. Salter, a white Democrat, served as Speaker of the House, and Yvonne Dorsey, an African-American, served as Speaker Pro Tempore.<sup>53</sup> The Speaker of the House performs the presiding functions of the House and the Speaker Pro Tempore presides over the committee system and is an ex-officio member of all standing committees. The Louisiana House has a total of 17 standing committees.<sup>54</sup> Each committee has a chairperson and vice-chairperson.

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<sup>52</sup> In 1977, the city of New Orleans elected its first black mayor, Ernest "Dutch" Morial and black candidates have won all mayoral elections thereafter. On May 20, 2006, Incumbent Mayor Ray Nagin defeated Lt. Governor Mitch Landrieu and was re-elected as mayor of New Orleans. Moon Landrieu, father of Mitch Landrieu, had occupied the office from 1970-1978.

<sup>53</sup> These legislative leaders also presided over the post-Hurricane Katrina legislative sessions.

<sup>54</sup> The committees are as follows: (1) Administration of Criminal Justice, (2) Agriculture, Forestry, Aquaculture and Rural Development, (3) Appropriations, (4) Civil Law and Procedure, (5) Commerce, (6) Education, (7) Environment, (8) Health and Welfare, (9) House and Governmental Affairs, (10) Insurance, (11) Judiciary, (12) Labor and Industrial Relations, (13) Municipal, Parochial and Cultural Affairs, (14) Natural



## **Louisiana House Committee Assignments**

Hypothesis number 11 holds that African-Americans are more likely than white legislators to sit on committees that address “black interest” bills. Past studies have found that African-American state legislators are more likely than white legislators to introduce bills in the policy areas of employment, health-care, and social welfare policies (Bratton and Haynie 1999, Haynie 2001).<sup>55</sup> Therefore, African-American legislators are expected to be more likely than white legislators to sit on committees such as, but not limited to, Education and Health and Welfare. To test this hypothesis, African-American legislators were asked which committees are important for black legislators to be assigned to. Six African-American legislators responded that committees in the areas of education, health care, and social welfare were most important. A junior legislator explained, “Education is most important. We need to be on this committee to oversee the systemic problems that occur when we are not educated to improve our quality of life... committees like Education, Health Care are so important.” Another junior legislator stated, “Education, Health Care. These committees are important for blacks.”

African-Americans were represented on Education, 27 percent, and Health and Welfare, 24 percent. African-American legislators only make-up 22 percent of the House in comparison to their white counterparts who make-up 78 percent. Hypothesis number 11 is therefore confirmed, but the difference is not large.

In the post-Hurricane Katrina period, several of the legislators responded that the Insurance committee has become important for Louisiana residents due to insurance

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Resources, (15) Retirement, (16) Transportation, Highway and Public Works, and (17) Ways and Means.

<sup>55</sup> Also see Russell and Jewel (1992) and Walters (2001).

related problems after the storm. According to a junior legislator, “I’m on the Insurance committee which I think is important, especially after Katrina.” Another junior legislator stated, “[The] Insurance [committee] has become very important, and I am glad that [Rep.] Karen Carter is the chairman of that committee because she understands after the hurricane how important the functions of that committee are.” African-Americans hold 21 percent of the seats on the Insurance committee.

The majority of African-American legislators identified the Appropriations and Ways and Means committees to be the most important. A junior legislator stated, “Of course, Appropriations and Way and Means, because that is where the money is facilitated.” Another junior legislators explained, “The Appropriations, Ways and Means, and now probably the Insurance committee. Appropriations and Ways and Means is where the money is at. So, they are definitely important.” A senior legislator agreed by saying, “All committees that spend money. Appropriations, Ways and Means, and Insurance.”

Hypothesis number 12 holds that African-Americans are less likely than white legislators to receive prestige/power committee assignments. African-American House members were asked whether they believed they were less likely to be assigned to prestige/power committees like Appropriations and Ways and Means. A majority, contrary to the hypothesis, said they were not less likely to be named to these committees. A senior legislator explained, “I think blacks are just as likely. I do give a lot of credit to the Governor for making sure blacks are represented on these committees.” Another senior legislator stated, “We as an LLBC, we have been fortunate at flexing our political muscle. So you see us on those committees.” In fact, African-

Americans do have a notable presence on Appropriations and Ways and Means, comprising 32 percent membership on each committee. This is 10 percent points above their share of the chamber. Neither the interview data nor the descriptive data support hypothesis number 12.

### **Campaign Strategies of African-American House Members**

This section examines the campaign strategies of African-American House members. Specifically, the type of campaign strategies these legislators have employed to gain or retain legislative office and whether the types of campaign strategies employed affect their positions and success in the legislative area.

#### **Campaign Strategies**

Hypothesis number 10 holds that black candidates who advocated race-specific policies in their campaigns would be less likely to serve in leadership positions, chair committees, and have their legislation enacted than black candidates who campaign on biracial themes. When African-American legislators were asked whether they advocated race-specific policies or avoided them in their campaigns, all 18 of those interviewed responded that they avoided them. Hypothesis number 10, therefore, cannot be tested.

African-American legislators did provide responses to explain their position to avoid race-specific policies in their campaigns. According to a junior legislator, “It actually wasn’t a conscience effort on my part, I advocated the fact to represent Louisiana as a whole. I didn’t look at promoting any specific bills or policies. I guess that is one thing I subconsciously don’t do.” Another junior legislator responded, “I attempted to avoid them. I spoke to everyone. I spoke to African-Americans the same way I spoke to Caucasians.” A senior legislator further stated, “I did not [advocate race specific

policies]. In the past 8 years I did not have any opposition. I always avoided race issues. I have not been the type of person to do the race issues. I just try to do things to make the quality of life of the people in the district better.”

There were several African-American House members that responded that while they avoided race-specific policies, they were aware of the importance of representing the African-American base in their district. A junior legislator offered this response, “I try to avoid them, but the reality is that the majority of people that you serve, you have a tendency to address the concerns of the majority. But one thing I do is be mindful of my minority whom are in there [too].” Another junior legislator responded, “In my campaign, I avoided them. It wasn’t important to address policies from a race perspective. But I do know that issues I addressed would greatly affect the blacks in my district.”

### **Summary**

The purpose of this chapter was to examine the three salient dimensions of substantive representation, political incorporation and campaign strategies. The findings indicate that African-American legislators did provide substantive representation to their constituents. Voting rights legislation that facilitated access to the ballot for displaced residents, especially African-Americans, played a central role in the representation of constituents. African-American legislators were able to influence the agenda. Indeed they were the only legislators to introduce voting rights legislation designed to facilitate access to the ballot. African-American legislators were significantly more supportive than white legislators in their roll-call votes. However, they were not on the winning side

of all roll-call votes, receiving strong opposition from Republicans and limited support from white Democrats.

African-Americans were well represented on the standing committees in the Louisiana House. On committees most noted to address black interests, such as Education, Health and Welfare, and Insurance (after the storm), African-Americans were close to proportionally represented. More notably, however, they were “overrepresented” on both the Appropriations and Ways and Means committees, which are considered prestige/power committees.

All African-Americans interviewed reported that they campaigned on biracial themes and avoided race-specific policies. Although apparently “deracializing” their campaigns (Perry 1996), they also noted the importance of representing the African-American majority in their districts.

Chapter Six will review a set of conclusions drawn from this research. The chapter will highlight some of the findings, and suggest recommendations for future research.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Conclusion**

The preceding chapters have provided important findings related to African-American legislators in Louisiana. Since 1968 the number of African-American legislators in Louisiana has grown significantly. In 2007 there were a total of 32 African-American legislators. Louisiana ranks among other states with the highest number, 32, and percentage, 22, of African-American legislators. Yet, despite their relatively large presence few scholarly studies have examined their legislative behavior. This study focuses primarily on their substantive representation of African-Americans, especially during the post-Hurricane Katrina period.

The findings indicate that African-American legislators have provided substantive representation to their African-American constituents. As explained in chapter 1, this study argued that previous studies have misidentified substantive representation as being on the winning side of roll-call votes, rather than adhering to Pitkin's (1967, 209) definition of acting in a manner that is responsive to the constituent. In this study, substantive representation included, but was not limited to, service to their constituents, contact with constituents, resources provided to their districts, bill introduction, the co-sponsorship of bills, roll-call voting, and bill passage.

According to African-American legislators interviewed in the study, they did not gain or retain their legislative office by campaigning on race-specific policies. All African-American legislators indicated, without exception, that they avoided them. The consensus from these legislators was that campaigns that exploited racial issues were of no benefit in their election bid.

The study also provided evidence that African-Americans have achieved a level of political incorporation in the Louisiana House that places them in a situation helpful to responding to their constituents needs. They are slightly overrepresented on the Education, and Health and Welfare committees, which are viewed by legislators as committees that deal with issues of concern to African-Americans. They are also overrepresented, proportionately, on both the Appropriations and Ways and Means committees, which are viewed as being the power/prestige committees within the chamber.

In the post-Hurricane Katrina period, African-American legislators responded to the needs and concerns of their constituents by being accessible to them and helping displaced residents return to Louisiana. Constituency service needs ranged from picking up trash after the storm, removal of FEMA trailers, incarceration issues, legal issues concerning insurance, to helping individuals apply for the Road Home program.

One of the critical issues for African-Americans following Katrina was voting rights. African-Americans were disproportionately among those displaced from their homes and residing outside the city. More than 73 percent of those displaced were estimated to be black (Sadow 2006). This was not just a “rights” issue, but an important political issue as well. The next municipal election in New Orleans was to be held April 22, 2006, and the racial composition of the city’s electorate was expected to be very important to the outcome of the forthcoming mayoral election. According to a junior legislator, “White legislators saw this as an opportunity for New Orleans to get a makeover. If the blacks that were displaced could not vote, then that was bound to happen. [There would] no longer [be] a political dominance of black politicians and

especially a black mayor.” One African-American legislator stated, “The whole issue of enfranchisement was the tie that brought legislators together. It is the fundamental cord of democracy.”

Only African-Americans, all freshmen legislators from New Orleans, introduced voting rights bills. No white representatives did so. African-Americans were also more supportive than white legislators in their roll-call votes when such bills reached the floor of the chamber. African-American legislators were virtually unanimous in their support for these measures. White Democrats provided more limited and varied support. Republicans strongly opposed all of them. Four of the bills, however, did pass and became law.

The enhanced access to the ballot for displaced persons played an important role in the 2006 New Orleans mayoral election. African-American incumbent Mayor Ray Nagin was reelected in a racially polarized vote. Nagin won the run-off election with 52 percent of the vote, while Lt. Gov. Mitch Landrieu, a white, received 48 percent. The vote was split largely along racial lines. One study reports that Nagin received 83 percent of the African-American votes and 20 percent of the white votes in the run-off (Lui, forthcoming).<sup>56</sup> This was sufficient to win the close election because African-Americans constituted 56 percent of the run-off voters.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

This study of African-Americans in the Louisiana House provided a framework for future research in the study of African-American state legislators. Using a similar methodological approach, additional studies can be performed. First, because

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<sup>56</sup> See also Anne R. Konigsmark, “New Orleans’ Upheaval Shows in Vote Results,” *USA TODAY*, April 24, 2006, pg. A1.



conclusions drawn from this study were mainly applicable to Louisiana, we can expect that some of these findings may not be generalizable to other southern state legislatures. The most recent comparative study of southern legislatures, by Menifield and Shaffer (2005), provided only a brief treatment of African-American legislators in Louisiana. It would be important to include the Louisiana legislature in the overall analysis of southern state legislatures to determine the extent to which it is similar or different from the others.

Second, a study of the incorporation of African-American female legislators to examine their political influence would be an important study. Despite their small presence in many state legislatures, compared to their African-American male counterparts, they have been elected to key legislative leadership positions. For example, in Louisiana, African-American female legislators have held key positions. In 2003, Senator Diana Bajoie was elected senate president pro tempore and Rep. Sharon Weston Broome house speaker pro tempore. In 2006, Rep. Yvonne Dorsey replaced Rep. Broome as house speaker pro tempore. And Rep. Jefferson-Bullock introduced 11 of the 22 voting rights bills, including two of the four that became law.

Finally, a study of the substantive representation of African-American legislators in Louisiana examining other important policy areas identified in the post-Hurricane Katrina period would complement this study. In these legislative sessions, African-Americans introduced legislation in the policy areas of: (1) emergency preparedness, (2) housing, (3) commerce, (4) insurance, as well as (5) voting rights. While this study focused on voting rights bills because they unambiguously reflected a black interest to expand access to the ballot for displaced black voters, it would also be important to analyze the behavior of African-American legislators on those other bills.

The findings in this study showed that race matters in the Louisiana House of Representatives. African-American legislators were strong supporters of black interests, specifically voting rights legislation introduced to facilitate access to the ballot for displaced black voters. As a group, these individuals united together to address a major voting rights concern and enabled black constituents to be active participants in the political process.

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- <http://www.legis.state.la.us/>: The Web Portal to the Louisiana State Legislature
- <http://house.legis.state.la.us/>: The Louisiana House of Representatives
- <http://senate.legis.state.la.us/>: The Louisiana State Senate

## **LIST OF APPENDICES**

APPENDIX A.1- Cover Letter for Request of Interviews

APPENDIX A.2- Interview Schedule

APPENDIX A.3- Voting Rights Bills in the Post-Hurricane Katrina Legislative Sessions

APPENDIX A.4- Roll-Call Votes in the Post-Hurricane Katrina Legislative Sessions

**Appendix A.1: Request for the Interview**  
Letter of Transmittal

1010 Common Street  
Suite 3040  
New Orleans, Louisiana 70122

RE: Interview

Dear Representative LaFonta,

Greetings. My name is William T. Hoston, an African-American Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Political Science at the University of New Orleans. I am writing my dissertation on the influence of African-American legislators in the Louisiana legislature.

I am asking for your assistance with providing an interview for the dissertation. It will be necessary to conduct a personal interview with you and the other black members of the Louisiana legislature. The interviews will be used to provide a comprehensive examination of black representation in the legislature.

Professional and ethical standards will be adhered to in maintaining the confidentiality of the information you provide. Absolutely no names will be used in the final reports, and information you discussed will be held strictly confidential. I understand that your time is limited and will need to open your schedule to arrange this interview. However, it would be greatly appreciated if we could meet at your earliest convenience, especially while you are in Baton Rouge.

Thank you in advance for your assistance. I will contact you to schedule a date for the interview. Should you have any questions about this project, please do not hesitate to contact me at my current work address: Wichita State University, Department of Political Science, 1845 N. Fairmount, Wichita, Kansas 67260. In addition, you may contact me at (xxx) xxx-xxxx or via email at wthoston@uno.edu. You may also contact the professor chairing my dissertation committee, Dr. Richard Engstrom at (xxx) xxx-xxxx, or richard.engstrom@uno.edu.

Respectfully,

William T. Hoston, Ph.D. Candidate

## **Appendix A.2: Interview**

### **AFRICAN-AMERICAN STATE LEGISLATORS INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

#### **Substantive Representation:**

1. What services do you believe are important for black legislators to provide to constituents in their districts?
  - 1a. How much of your time is devoted to services for your constituents?
  - 1b. How much of your staff members time is devoted to services for constituents?
  - 1c. How often do constituents in your district write letters, email, or call to address their concerns?
  - 1d. What issues are most frequently raised? What methods of response are used to address concerns?
  - 1e. What resources have you been able to provide to your district?
2. Do you introduce legislation that you believe will address the interests of not only blacks in your district, but blacks in general?
3. What is your assessment of the governmental response to the Hurricane Katrina evacuation efforts? Local? State? Federal?
4. Do you believe that race played a role in the slow response of governmental assistance? If yes, explain?
5. What are black legislators doing to help constituents affected by Hurricane Katrina?
6. Have black legislators been successful in these efforts?
7. Do you believe that black legislators were successful in their efforts to introduce and pass legislation dealing with voting rights in the post-Hurricane Katrina Legislative sessions, especially access to the ballot for people displaced from New Orleans?
8. Do you believe that race played a role in the defeat of voting rights legislation that would have allowed more displaced New Orleans residents to vote in the 2006 municipal elections?

**Campaign Strategies:**

9. Did you in your campaign advocate race-specific policies or avoid them?
10. On a scale ranging from 1-3, in your campaign how much emphasis did you give to civil rights?
1. A Lot
  2. A Little
  3. Not at all
- 10a. In your campaign how much emphasis did you give to education?
- 10b. In your campaign how much emphasis did you give to family values?
- 10c. In your campaign how much emphasis did you give to health care?
- 10d. In your campaign how much emphasis did you give to tax reduction?
- 10e. In your campaign how much emphasis did you give to social welfare?
- 10f. In your campaign how much emphasis did you give to economic development?

**Political Incorporation:**

11. In your opinion, what committees are important for black legislators to be assigned? And why?
12. Do you believe that African-Americans are less likely to be assigned to prestige/power committees (i.e., Ways and Means, Appropriations, Taxation, and Budgeting)?
13. Do you believe it is important for black legislators to hold leadership positions (i.e., leader pro tempore, assistant majority/minority leaders or whips, or chairperson/vice-chairperson of legislative committees) in order to have an influence on the legislative agenda and the passing of legislation?

## **Appendix A.3**

### **VOTING RIGHTS BILLS INTRODUCED IN THE POST-HURRICANE KATRINA LEGISLATIVE SESSIONS**

#### **Legal Instruments/Documents**

HB= House Bill

#### **2005 1<sup>st</sup> Extraordinary Legislative Session**

1. HB57: SUBJECT TO CALL-HOUSE REFERRAL. [Bill not assigned to committee.]

JALILA JEFFERSON—AFRICAN-AMERICAN.

Provides relative to conducting an election during and following a gubernatorially declared state of emergency; to provide for procedures for the registrar of voters relative to returned notices of registration or change of registration of temporarily displaced persons; to provide for procedures for the registrar of voters relative to returned verification mailings of temporary displaced persons; to provide for displaced persons who have registered to vote by mail to vote absentee by mail; to require certain documentation showing displaced status.

2. HB58: ASSIGNED TO HOUSE AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS. [Bill died in committee.]

JALILA JEFFERSON—AFRICAN-AMERICAN.

Makes certain provisions relative to voting absentee by mail by United States service members and persons residing outside the United States applicable to persons temporarily displaced by the recent common disaster and state of emergency; The legislature, therefore, enacts this section to provide for the following provisions, applicable to members of the U.S. Service or persons residing outside the U.S. to apply to any person temporarily displaced from his parish of residence when he submits with an application to vote by mail documentation showing his displaced status; shall be effective for a period of one year following the effective date.

3. HB59 (essentially same as item #1): FAILED HOUSE FINAL PASSAGE.

JALILA JEFFERSON—AFRICAN-AMERICAN.

Provides relative to the conduct of elections during or following a gubernatorially declared state of emergency.

4. HB100: ASSIGNED TO HOUSE AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS. [Bill died in committee]

CEDRIC RICHMOND—AFRICAN-AMERICAN.

Allows registered voters temporarily displaced by a gubernatorially declared state of emergency who have registered by mail to vote absentee by mail without first voting in person or appearing in the office of the registrar.

5. HB136: INVOLUNTARILY DEFERRED IN HOUSE AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS.

[Bill died in committee; Author of bill did not want bill deferred.]

JUAN LAFONTA—AFRICAN-AMERICAN.

Provides for parochial and municipal elections in a parish containing a municipality with a population of four hundred seventy-five thousand persons [New Orleans] after a gubernatorial declaration of a state of emergency; To provide for further delay of such elections if more than twenty percent of the registered voters have not yet returned to their parishes of residence.

6. HB138 (essentially same as item #5):

INVOLUNTARILY DEFERRED IN HOUSE AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS.

[Bill died in committee; Author of bill did not want bill deferred.]

JALILA JEFFERSON—AFRICAN-AMERICAN.

Provides for parochial and municipal elections in a parish containing a municipality with a population of four hundred seventy-five thousand persons after a gubernatorial declaration of a state of emergency.

## **2006 1<sup>st</sup> Extraordinary Legislative Session**

7. HB12 (essentially same as item #4): SIGNED BY THE GOVERNOR.

JALILA JEFFERSON—AFRICAN-AMERICAN.

Allows registered voters temporarily displaced by a gubernatorially declared state of emergency who have registered by mail to vote absentee by mail without first voting in person at the polls or appearing or voting at the registrar's office.

8. HB13 (essentially same as item #2):

ASSIGNED TO HOUSE AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS. [Bill died in committee.]

JALILA JEFFERSON—AFRICAN-AMERICAN.

Makes certain provisions of law relative to voting absentee by mail by U.S. service members and persons residing outside the U.S. applicable to persons temporarily displaced by the recent common disaster and state of emergency.

9. HB14: FAILED HOUSE FINAL PASSAGE.

JALILA JEFFERSON—AFRICAN-AMERICAN.

For an election for which the legislature has approved the secretary of state's emergency plan, authorizes the registered voters of the affected area to vote during the early voting period at any office of the registrar in any parish with a population of 100,000 or more.

10. HB30 (essentially same as item #4):

ASSIGNED TO HOUSE AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS. [Bill died in committee.]

CHARMAINE MARCHAND—AFRICAN-AMERICAN.

Allows registered voters temporarily displaced by a gubernatorially declared state of emergency who have registered by mail to vote absentee by mail without first voting in person at the polls or appearing or voting at the registrar's office.

11. HB63: ASSIGNED TO HOUSE AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS. [Bill died in committee.]

CEDRIC RICHMOND—AFRICAN-AMERICAN.

For an election in an area for which the legislature has approved the secretary of state's emergency plan, authorizes the registered voters of the affected area to vote during the early voting period at any office of the registrar in any parish.

12. HB64 (essentially same as item #11): ASSIGNED TO HOUSE AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS.  
[Bill died in committee.]

JUAN LAFONTA—AFRICAN-AMERICAN.

For an election in an area for which the legislature has approved the secretary of state's emergency plan, authorizes the registered voters of the affected area to vote during the early voting period at any office of the registrar in any Louisiana parish.

13. HB65 (essentially same as item #11): ASSIGNED TO HOUSE AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS.  
[Bill died in committee.]

JUAN LAFONTA—AFRICAN-AMERICAN.

For an election in an area for which the legislature has approved the secretary of state's emergency plan, authorizes the registered voters of the affected area to vote during the early voting period at any office of the registrar in any parish.

14. HB66 (essentially same as item #11): ASSIGNED TO HOUSE AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS.  
[Bill died in committee.]

CEDRIC RICHMOND—AFRICAN-AMERICAN.

For an election in an area for which the legislature has approved the secretary of state's emergency plan, authorizes the registered voters of the affected area to vote during the early voting period at any office of the registrar of any parish.

15. HB67 (essentially same as item #4):

ASSIGNED TO HOUSE AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS. [Bill died in committee.]

CEDRIC RICHMOND—AFRICAN-AMERICAN.

Allows registered voters temporarily displaced by a gubernatorially declared state of emergency who have registered by mail to vote absentee by mail without first voting in person at the polls or appearing or voting at the registrar's office.

### **2006 Regular Legislative Session**

16. HB490: ASSIGNED TO HOUSE AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS. [Bill died in committee.]

JALILA JEFFERSON—AFRICAN-AMERICAN.

Provides for a voter to vote on a paper ballot if he appears at the incorrect polling place on election day but is a valid registrant of that parish who is eligible to vote in that election.

17. HB587: SIGNED BY THE GOVERNOR.

JALILA JEFFERSON—AFRICAN-AMERICAN.

Provides relative to residency or domicile requirements for voting, and qualifying for or holding office, when a person has been temporarily displaced by a gubernatorially declared state of emergency; Allow a person who has been involuntarily displaced from his place of residence by the effects of a gubernatorially declared state of emergency shall not be considered to have vacated his residence and shall be considered to be an actual bona fide resident of the state and parish in which he is registered to vote unless he has either established a new domicile or has changed his registration to an address outside the voting district.

18. HB641: ASSIGNED TO HOUSE AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS. [Bill died in committee.]

JALILA JEFFERSON—AFRICAN-AMERICAN.

Relative to elections held in certain areas that have been affected by a gubernatorially declared emergency or disaster, authorizes the registered voters of the affected area to vote during the early voting period at certain temporary satellite voting locations.

19. HB818: ASSIGNED TO HOUSE AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS. [Bill died in committee.]

JALILA JEFFERSON—AFRICAN-AMERICAN.

Provides that a person who is involuntarily displaced from his place of residence by a gubernatorially declared state of emergency does not lose his resident status if he intends to return to the place of residence.

20. HB1088: ASSIGNED TO HOUSE AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS. [Bill died in committee.]

CHARMAINE MARCHAND—AFRICAN-AMERICAN.

Requires the secretary of state to include temporary addresses for certain registered voters in the statewide voter registration database for purposes of mailing information regarding elections or voting.

21. HB1390: SIGNED BY THE GOVERNOR.

CHERYL GRAY—AFRICAN-AMERICAN.

Authorizes the secretary of state to include the conduct of early voting in certain parishes as part of an emergency plan to conduct elections impaired by a gubernatorially declared disaster or emergency.

22. HB193: SIGNED BY THE GOVERNOR.

JUAN LAFONTA—AFRICAN-AMERICAN.

Provides for the reinstatement of prior voter registration information for a voter who re-registers to vote in a parish in which he was previously registered, provided that he re-registers within three years of cancellation of his registration in that parish.



## **VOTING RIGHTS RESOLUTIONS IN THE POST-HURRICANE KATRINA LEGISLATIVE SESSIONS**

### **Legal Instruments/Documents**

HCR= House Concurrent Resolution

23. HCR31: FILED WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

[Recommendation to the Secretary of State to explore this item.]

CHERYL GRAY—AFRICAN-AMERICAN.

Requests the Louisiana secretary of state to work cooperatively with other agencies to contact all displaced individuals to provide them information relative to their voting rights and how to register to vote in upcoming elections.

24. HCR32: SUBJECT TO CALL-HOUSE REFERRAL. [Resolution returned to the calendar.]

CHERYL GRAY—AFRICAN-AMERICAN.

Suspend until sixty days after adjournment of the 2006 regular session of the legislature of Louisiana the provisions of R.S. 18:193(A), (D), and (E) which provide procedures for the challenge and cancellation of voter registration; Requires a registrar of voters, when the registrar has reason to believe a registrant is no longer qualified or that a registrant has changed his residence, to immediately notify the person by sending an address confirmation card to the registrant and place the voter on the inactive list of voters and R.S. 18:193(D) and (E) provide for the registrar to cancel the voter's registration under certain circumstances (i.e. Hurricanes Katrina and Rita).

25. HCR2 (essentially same as item #24): SENT TO THE GOVERNOR.

[Recommendation to the Governor to explore this item.]

CHARLES LANCASTER—WHITE REPUBLICAN.

Suspends the provisions of law relative to the annual canvass of voters until 60 days after the 2006 Regular Session.

26. HCR14 (essentially same as item #24):

ASSIGNED TO HOUSE AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS.

[Recommendation to the House and Governmental Affairs committee.]

JALILA JEFFERSON—AFRICAN-AMERICAN.

Suspends the provisions of law relative to the annual canvass of voters until 60 days after the 2006 Regular Session.

27. HCR304: FILED WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

[Recommendation to the Secretary of State to explore this item.]

CHARMAINE MARCHAND—AFRICAN-AMERICAN.

Requests the secretary of state to address certain issues related to a registered voter's address, eligibility to vote absentee by mail, and procedures for voting absentee by mail during the official state voter registration week to be held two weeks prior to the close of registration for the September 30, 2006, election.

#### Appendix A.4

### ROLL-CALL VOTES IN THE POST-HURRICANE KATRINA LEGISLATIVE SESSIONS

Author/Bill	Item #	# of Votes	Action (s)	Yeas/Nays
J. JEFFERSON	Item #3	2 Votes	1. Amendment 2. Failed House Final Passage	1. 68/29 2. 44/53
J. JEFFERSON	Item #7	2 Votes	1. Concur in Senate Amendments 2. House Final Passage	1. 66/32 2. 71/29
J. JEFFERSON HB 14	Item #9	2 Votes	1. Amendment 2. Failed House Final Passage	1. 54/39 2. 46/53
J. JEFFERSON	Item #17	2 Votes	1. Concur in Senate Amendments 2. House Final Passage	1. 89/4 2. 98/0
C. GRAY	Item #21	1 Vote	1. House Final Passage	1. 96/1
J. LAFONTA	Item #22	2 Votes	1. Concur in Senate Amendment 2. House Final Passage	1. 99/0 2. 98/6

Source: <http://www.legis.state.la.us/>, 2007.

## VITA

William T. Hoston (Ph.D., University of New Orleans 2007) is an assistant professor in the Department of Political Science at Wichita State University. His teaching interests are in American Government, African-American and Minority Politics, State and Urban Government, and Legislative Process.

Dr. Hoston first began teaching at the collegiate level as a teaching assistant at Florida State University. This introduction to higher education propelled him into the career of academia. Since then, he has worked at some of the major research universities in the country. Dr. Hoston has taught in multiple disciplines in social sciences that include political science, criminology and criminal justice, sociology, African-American history and psychology. His experience involves over ten years of university teaching, that include small to large sized lecture and seminar classes.

Dr. Hoston's research examines areas of minority voting behavior, political behavior of African-American politicians, and race and minority group behavior. His dissertation entitled, "African-American Legislators Post-Katrina: Race, Representation, and Voting Rights Issues in the Louisiana House" explored the scope and nature of African-American representation in Louisiana in the post-Hurricane Katrina period. His research has appeared in the *American Review of Politics*, *Journal of Southern Studies* and *Journal of Black Studies*.